WIN A Ford Mustang Convertible!

See Inside Front Cover For Details

PWI

Pro Wrestling Illustrated

THE ROCK AN

HBK's Honor Society

Press Conference: Raven

'Mania's Real Winners & Losers!

Goldberg

He Has WWE Caught Between The Rock And A Hard Place!

AUGUST 2003

$5.95 U.S. $8.95 CANADA £3.95 U.K.

08

7 25274 00388 4

Display Until July 8

WIN

A Ford Mustang Convertible!

PLUS 1,000 other prizes!

PWI®

HAS MADE THE FIRST MOVE ... THE REST IS UP TO YOU...

ENTER FOR FREE!

To be eligible to win the Ford Mustang Convertible, all you have to do is send in the entry/order form below.

If that sounds incredible, check this out!

We're offering

SUPER SAVINGS

on PWI®

You can enter the sweepstakes automatically with your subscription to PRO WRESTLING ILLUSTRATED **and save more than $31 off the newsstand cover price!** Of course, you can enter the sweepstakes without ordering a subscription if you like.

Subscribe NOW!

WIN $1,000,000!

To be eligible to win the Super Million Dollar X Sweepstakes, all you have to do is send in the entry/order form below. Just imagine... ONE MILLION DOLLARS ... that's 30 annual payments of $33,333.34 if you're the Super Grand Prize Winner!

See page 113 for complete sweepstakes rules. No purchase is required to enter or win. A purchase does not improve your chances of winning.

PWI SUBSCRIBER/SWEEPSTAKES ENTRY/ORDER FORM

☐ **Yes,** Enter me in the Sweepstakes and also sign me up for the next 12 issues of PWI (including all three 180-page monster specials) for $52.00—**a savings of more than $31!** (LPWS)

Please indicate method of payment:

☐ Check or money order (enclosed and payable to London Publishing Co.)

☐ VISA ☐ MasterCard

Card number: _____

Expiration date: ___/___ MO/YR

☐ New Subscription ☐ Renewal

Signature _____

Send To: **London Publishing Co.,** P.O. Box 2021, Dept. 9, Marion, OH 43306-8121

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____ **APT** _____

CITY _____ **STATE** ____ **ZIP** _____

EMAIL _____

☐ **No,** I am not ordering at this time, but please enter me in the sweepstakes. (BSPV)

For Canada and all other countries: $64.00 for a 12-issue subscription ($88.00 airmail). All orders outside the U.S., international money orders in U.S. funds only. Please allow up to eight weeks before you receive your first magazine. **Super Million Dollar Sweepstakes X is void in Florida and Texas. Florida and Texas residents may not enter to win the Super Million Dollar prize, but they can enter for all remaining prizes offered in the Prize Fantasy Sweepstakes.** See page 113 for complete sweepstakes rules. **No purchase is required to enter or win. A purchase does not improve your chances of winning.** Sweepstakes ends 1/16/04.

SCMW06

6107

from the desk of...

YOU CAN SAY one thing about this columnist: If nothing else, I'm inconsistent.

A little more than a year ago, I wrote in *PWI's* sister publication *Inside Wrestling* of my increasing respect for WWE Chairman Vince McMahon. I was impressed with his willingness to rehire a group of wrestlers who had left his employ years before and had willfully (and proudly) damaged his business in so doing. That group included Kevin Nash, Scott Hall, Goldust, Curt Hennig, and Hulk Hogan. I heaped praise on him for putting the good of the company over his personal feelings. I don't know if I would have been able to do the same.

I noted at the time that the only person he couldn't possibly bring back was Sable. Her actions went beyond betrayal; she brought McMahon to court, and would have been very happy to have ruined him and his business.

The rehiring of Sable ranks with that of Vince Russo on the "anything can happen in WWE" scale. Of course, the Russo experiment ended when McMahon's own daughter slapped him back to reality, and the Sable project might indeed increase WWE's profitability; let's allow Vince to exercise his judgment here. But the long-range impact of such moves (including the signing of Roddy Piper, to a lesser extent) could be profoundly damaging to the company. During the WWF's prolonged war with WCW in the 1990s, Vince McMahon rallied his forces by stressing an us-against-them attitude in opposing WCW's deep-pocketed owner, Time Warner. Mutual loyalty resulted in mutual trust. While Time Warner squandered money in a vain attempt to buy a lasting relationship between management and the rank-and-file, the WWF's forces battled as one, knowing that their survival depended on it.

If the wrestlers trusted the owner and their co-workers enough to give everything they had to survive, eventually the fans would catch on and throw their support behind their efforts. And that's exactly what happened. If someone didn't want to be part of the WWF team, they were encouraged to leave. Sable did, but she sued for millions on the way out with charges that had the potential to thrust the company back into the scandalous early-'90s. Piper, as brilliant and entertaining as he is, was badmouthing WWE until the second he signed next to Vince McMahon's name.

Both Sable and Piper might have been right about everything they've said about WWE. But that's irrelevant. What is relevant is that by allowing them back in the fold, McMahon is saying that the sacrifices his wrestlers made in the 20th century hold no importance in the 21st century.

Walk out on the company, badmouth the company, sue the company—it doesn't matter to McMahon and it probably doesn't matter to the fans. But you can bet it matters to everyone in that WWE locker room, particularly the ones who saved the company when things looked bleakest. One day, Vince might learn a painful lesson that those are the people to whom he should be entrusting the future of his business.

Stu Saks
Publisher

Pro Wrestling Illustrated

STANLEY WESTON
Founder
(1919-2002)

PUBLISHER
Stuart M. Saks

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF
David Lenker

MANAGING EDITOR
Brandi Mankiewicz

SENIOR ART DIRECTOR
Walt Schmidt

ART DIRECTORS
Greg Stevens
Natalie Burke
Joseph Kalman

PRODUCTION MANAGER
Bethany Lawler

PRE-PRESS DIRECTOR
Cliff Campo

IMAGING DIRECTOR
Michael Kilgore

SENIOR WRITERS
Harry Burkett
Dan Murphy
Will Welsh
Frank Krewda

CONTRIBUTING WRITERS
Matt Brock
Elizabeth A. Hunter
Mike Spillane

CONTRIBUTING ARTIST
Jason Conlan

ASSISTANT EDITORS
Eric Raskin
Joseph Santoliquito

CONTRIBUTING PHOTOGRAPHERS
Duane Long
Joe Zanolle
George Tahinos
Steve Beyer
Vern Verna
Timothy A. Walker
Mike Lano
Scott Romer
James McAfee
Koichi Yoshizawa
Gary Dineen
Greg Greenland
Claus Andersen

EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT
Kenneth J. Gudaitis

CIRCULATION DIRECTOR
David Tyler

NATIONAL CIRCULATION MANAGERS
Robert Nucci
Rose Ann Adolfi
Dave Hagman

ADVERTISING DIRECTOR
Vince Bellissima
(215) 643-6385
vbellissima@kappapublishing.com

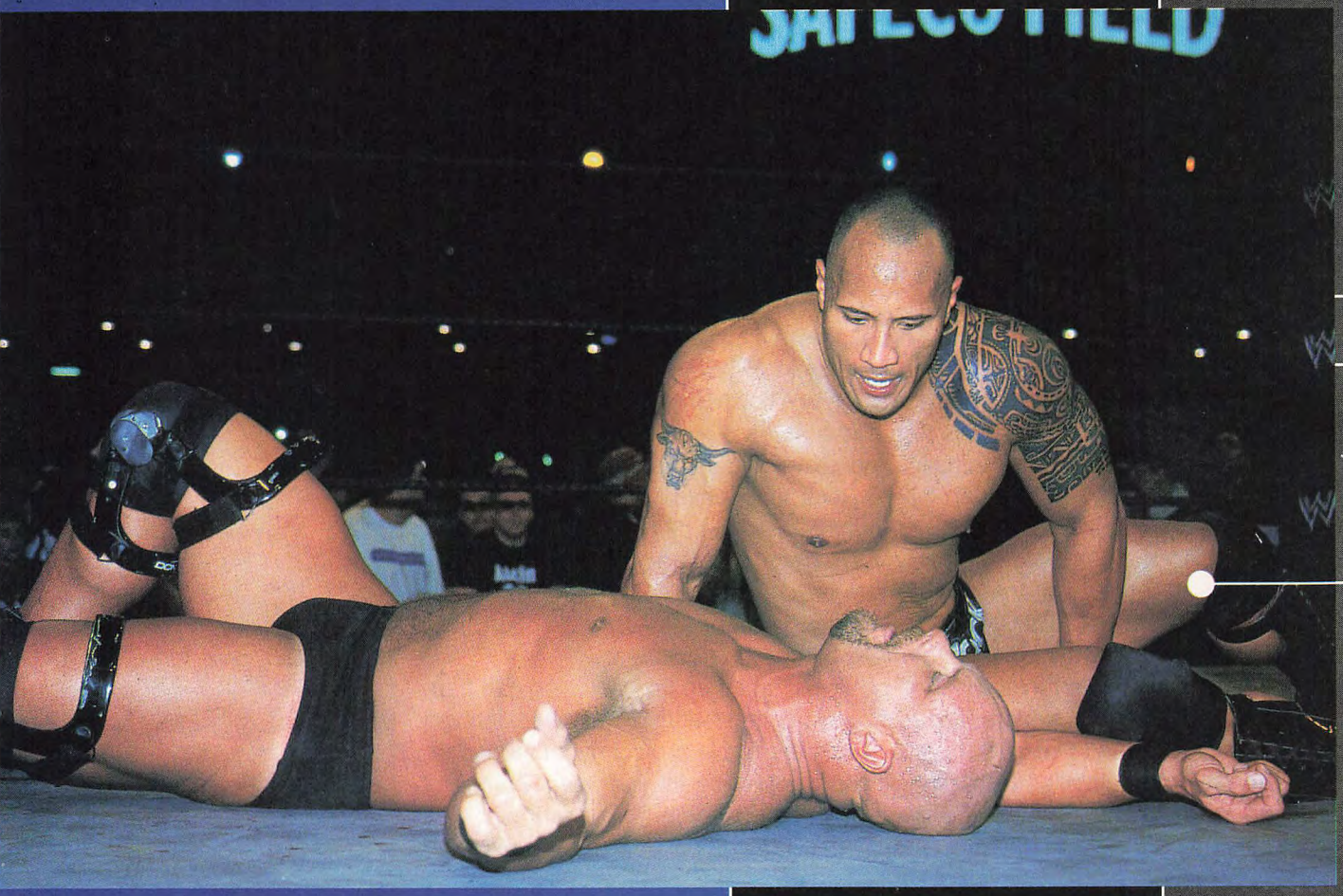
ADVERTISING ASSISTANT
Dianne Weber

SUBSCRIPTION INQUIRIES
London Publishing Co.
P.O. Box 2029, Dept. 9
Marion, OH 43306-8121
(815) 734-1212

Pro Wrestling Illustrated (ISSN: 1043-7576), Vol. 24, No. 9, August 2003, is published 12 times a year, including three special issues, by London Publishing Co., 7002 W. Butler Pike, Ambler, PA 19002. Periodicals postage paid at Ambler, PA 19002 and additional post offices. Postmaster: Send change of address notices to: Pro Wrestling Illustrated, P.O. Box 2029, Dept. 9, Marion, OH 43306-8121. Single copy price $5.95 ($13.95 in Canada, £5.95 in U.K.). Subscription price $83.40 in the U.S. ($122.40 in Canada and remaining countries). Not responsible for the loss or non-return of unsolicited articles or photographs, which will not be returned unless accompanied by a self-addressed envelope bearing the proper amount of postage.

The entire contents of this magazine are copyright ©2003 London Publishing Co. No part of this magazine may be reproduced without the written permission of the publisher. All rights reserved. FOR ADVERTISING INQUIRIES AND RATES: (215) 643-6385. U.S. and Canadian distribution by Kable Distribution Services Inc., 641 Lexington Ave., New York, NY 10022. International distribution by Worldwide Media Service Inc., 115 East 23rd St., New York, NY 10010. U.K. distribution by Comag, Tavistock Rd., West Drayton, Middlesex UB77QE, England.

Printed in U.S.A.



ECWA
SUPER
8

PWI®

August 2003

contents

features

24 **PRESS CONFERENCE: RAVEN**
Within a few months of his release from WWE, he has become a major player in NWA-TNA, Ring of Honor, and elsewhere. Yet he remains as much of an enigma as he has always been. We *tried* to get some answers from him ...

28 **WRESTLEMANIA XIX: THE *REAL* WINNERS AND LOSERS**
You probably saw the show. You know the results. But if you think you know who *really* won and lost in a big way at this year's WrestleMania, we suggest you check out this annual feature. You might not have been watching closely enough

42 **CLASS ACTS: A CLOSEUP LOOK AT SHAWN MICHAELS' HONOR SOCIETY**
What do Paul London, Brian "Spanky" Kendrick, Michael Shane, and American Dragon have in common? They're terrific young wrestlers, sure, but did you know they all came from the same training school—*HBK's* training school?

46 **LONDON CALLING! SHAWN MICHAELS' PROTEGE WINS 2003 SUPER 8**
Shawn Michaels' honor society now boasts its first ECWA Super 8 Tournament winner! It was an exciting but grueling night for London and the man he beat in the finals, Chance Beckett, but getting the win was worth every ounce of effort London had to put forth

52 **WHY GOLDBERG HAS WWE CAUGHT BETWEEN THE ROCK AND A HARD PLACE**
The Rock wanted "Da Man" in WWE, and Vince McMahon finally got the deal done. It could be a huge coup for the company, but it was a risky investment no matter how you look at it. And we've looked at it in many different ways!

LOOK FOR THE SEPTEMBER 2003 ISSUE OF *PWI* ON SALE JULY 8, 2003

COVER DESIGN:
Natalie Burke

departments

3 **FROM THE DESK OF ... Stu Saks**
This is how Vinnie Mac repays loyalty?

8 **BEFORE THE BELL**
Dictionary for dummies, "Internet Insider," "Talkin' Trash," more

12 **RINGSIDE with Will Welsh**
The scoop on Goldberg, Sable, Austin's neck, and more

16 **IN FOCUS by Dave Lenker**
With WrestleMania over, it's time for some changes in WWE

18 **OFF THE TOP ROPE with Brandi Mankiewicz**
Mail call for our very own "Queen"

20 **KREW-CUTS by Frank Krewda**
Torrie in *Playboy*, the shocking truth on Lawler, and other thoughts

56 **THE BUSINESS PAGE by Harry Burkett**
The major business stories, WWE stockwatch, ratings, more

60 **THE STEEL CAGE by Liz Hunter**
Angle's fourth "I," keeping a-breast of TNA, and much more

62 **WIN, LOSE, OR DRAW by Harry Burkett**
There's more to a lot of independent wrestlers that you think

64 **THE STRAIGHT SHOOTER by Dan Murphy**
The WrestleMania XIX snubs—and what they mean

68 **THE WRESTLING ANALYST**
We look closely at the strengths and weaknesses of Chief Morley

72 **SUPERSTARS & SUPERBOUTS**
Spotlighting the Steve Austin-Bret Hart WrestleMania XIII classic

76 **THE ULTIMATE WRESTLER**
Can you recognize the body parts of this odd *female* creature?

78 **12 QUESTIONS WITH ... NIKITA**
Not Nikita Koloff, you dope! It's Nikita from OVW

80 **FANTASTIC FINISHERS with Mike Spillane**
A close look at the oh-so-graceful senton

82 **THROUGH THE YEARS: THE TERRY FUNK FILES**
We cover 35-plus years in just eight photographs

84 ***THE WRESTLING OBSERVER* HALL OF FAME**
We honor one of the toughest WWWF champs, Superstar Graham

86 **INDEPENDENT ROUNDUP by Liz Hunter**
What's been happening on some of the smaller shows

88 **THE INTERNATIONAL REPORT by Mike Spillane**
The latest from Japan, Mexico, and so much more

92 **ARENA REPORTS**
Key results from around the world, plus our "Spotlight" card

100 ***PWI* CLASSIC**
We revisit an August 1988 story that predicts trouble between two Harts

106 **BETWEEN FALLS**
Legends Made?; Not A Dead Issue; Too Far Too Fast

108 **OFFICIAL WRESTLING RATINGS**
The mat sport's most respected rankings

110 **RATINGS ANALYSIS**
There are things about our ratings that need to be analyzed

112 **DRAWING BLOOD**
Featuring the outlandish artwork of Jason "Mr. J" Conlan

114 **WOW! CHECK OUT THIS SHOT!**
Sometimes even the wrestlers don't appear to know what's coming next

VISA MasterCard DISCOVER AMERICAN EXPRESS Card

E-Mail: info@wrestlingsuperstore.com

PHONE: 1-401-946-5720
FAX: 1-401-946-8492

WRESTLINGSUPERSTORE.com
5 Murad St. #2B, Cranston RI 02920

HOURS (EST)
Monday-Friday - 9 a.m.-8 p.m.
Saturday - 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Closed Sunday

WRESTLINGSUPERSTORE.COM
a Figures Inc. Company

website... www.wrestlingsuperstore.com

New Undisputed World Heavyweight Championship Belt

New

Version 2

Nameplates Available
Brock Lesnar™ Triple H™
Chris Jericho™ Hogan™
Undertaker® The Rock®
Kurt Angle™ Blank

This is an exact-scale replica that measures 4 feet 8 inches long and weighs approximately 5 pounds. The metal plates are 2 mm thick, and the medallions are ornamented by 10 simulated diamonds. The deluxe version of this belt includes a real leather strap, and the adult-size version includes a simulated leather strap. All versions of this belt include the new Property of plate. Includes one nameplate of your choice.

FIGURES TOY CO.

Adult-Size Replica WWEB12 $239.00
Deluxe Replica WWEDB12 $379.00

Undisputed Championship Belt

Nameplates Available:
Chris Jericho™ Hogan™ Undertaker® The Rock®
Kurt Angle™ Triple H™ Brock Lesnar™ Blank

Version 1

Adult-Size Replica WWEB9 $225.00
Kid-Size Replica WWEBK9 $109.00
Deluxe Replica WWEDB9 $369.00
Mini Replica WWEMINI9 $30.00

Cruiserweight Championship Belt

Nameplates Available: Billy Kidman™ The Hurricane™
Rey Mysterio Jamie Noble™ Tajiri™ Blank

New

Adult-Size Replica WWEB10 $225.00
Kid-Size Replica WWEBK10 $109.00
Deluxe Replica WWEDB10 $369.00
Mini Replica WWEMINI10 $30.00

Women's Championship Belt

Nameplates Available: Jazz™ · Lita™ · Ivory™ · Trish Stratus™
Molly Holly™ · Torrie Wilson™ · Stacy Keibler™ · Blank

New

Adult-Size Replica WWEB11 $225.00
Kid-Size Replica WWEBK11 $109.00
Deluxe Replica WWEDB11 $369.00
Mini Replica WWEMINI11 $30.00

Undisputed Championship Clock

This is an actual working clock with the Version 2 Undisputed Championship belt replica center plate.

New

Nameplates Available
Brock Lesnar™ Triple H™
Chris Jericho™ Hogan™
Undertaker® The Rock®
Kurt Angle™ Blank

Undisputed Replica Clock WWECLOCK1 $99.00

Hardcore Championship Belt

Adult-Size Replica WWEB6 $199.00
Kid-Size Replica WWEBK6 $99.00
Deluxe Replica WWEDB6 $349.00
Mini Replica WWEMINI6 $30.00

World Heavyweight Championship Belt

Nameplates Available: The Rock® · Chris Jericho™
Booker T™ · Kurt Angle™ · Triple H™ · Blank

Adult-Size Replica WCWB1 $199.00
Kid-Size Replica WCWBK1 $99.00
Deluxe Replica WCWDB1 $349.00
Mini Replica WCWMINI1 $30.00

Adult-size $225.00 each — UFC Replica Belts — Deluxe version $399.00 each

Heavyweight Adult-size (UFCB1) Deluxe version (UFCDB1)
Light Heavyweight Adult-size (UFCB2) Deluxe version (UFCDB2)
Middleweight Adult-size (UFCB3) Deluxe version (UFCDB3)
Welterweight Adult-size (UFCB4) Deluxe version (UFCDB4)
Lightweight Adult-size (UFCB5) Deluxe version (UFCDB5)

Exact-scale replica that measures 4 feet 4 inches long and weighs approximately 5 pounds. The strap is very detailed, the deluxe-size strap is actual leather, and the adult-size strap is made of simulated leather. Each belt comes with a blue carrying bag with the UFC logo on it.

Cruiserweight/United States/Tag Team Championship Belts

Adult-Size Replica $199.00
Cruiserweight WCWB4
United States WCWB3
Tag Team WCWB2

Deluxe Replica $349.00 Kid-Size Replica $99.00 Mini Replica $30.00
Cruiserweight WCWDB4 Cruiserweight WCWBK4 Cruiserweight WCWMINI4
United States WCWDB3 United States WCWBK3 United States WCWMINI3
Tag Team WCWDB2 Tag Team WCWBK2 Tag Team WCWMINI2

Adult-Size & Kid-Size Championship Replica Belts

Adult-size and kid-size exact-scale replicas are made of simulated leather. Each medallion is made of metal and is 2mm thick. The adult-size replica fits up to a 46-inch waist and the kid-size replica fits up to a 34-inch waist.

Deluxe Championship Replica Belts

All deluxe belts are full-size. Straps are made of genuine leather. All medallions are made of metal that is 2mm thick. Each deluxe belt fits up to a 46-inch waist.

Mini Championship Replica Belts

The mini replica belts are made from the same material as the full-size replica belts. Mini replicas are 12-inches long, and can be used as a wristband or for desktop display.

©2002 World Wrestling Entertainment, Inc. All Rights Reserved.
©2002 UFC is a trademark of Zuffa, LLC and is used under license. All Rights Reserved.

PAYMENT TERMS: CHECKS, MONEY ORDERS, ALL MAJOR CREDIT CARDS, CASH. MAKE CHECKS PAYABLE TO WRESTLING SUPERSTORE.COM NO ORDER FORM NEEDED, JUST WRITE DOWN ORDER ON A PIECE OF PAPER AND SEND ALONG WITH PAYMENT 30 DAY RETURN MONEY BACK GUARANTEE

• ORDERS SHIPPED SAME DAY RECEIVED
• INTERNATIONAL ORDERS WELCOMED (ADD $25.00 S/H PER TOTAL ORDER)

United States Shipping:
($1.00 to $50.00 add $6.00) ($50.01 to $99.99 add $7.00)
($100.00 to $199.99 add $10.00) ($200.00 & over add $12.00)

48 PAGE FULL-COLOR WRESTLING CATALOG: SEND $3.00 FOR A COPY

VISA MasterCard DISCOVER AMERICAN EXPRESS Card

E-Mail: info@wrestlingsuperstore.com

PHONE: 1-401-946-5720
FAX: 1-401-946-8492

WRESTLINGSUPERSTORE.com

HOURS (EST)
Monday-Friday - 9 a.m.-8 p.m.
Saturday - 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Closed Sunday

5 Murad St. #2B, Cranston RI 02920

WRESTLINGSUPERSTORE.COM
a Figures Inc. Company

website... www.wrestlingsuperstore.com

Attention Independent Wrestling Federation owners

Adult-Size Independent Belts

New

Available with optional Boxing, Martial Arts, or Wrestling side plates. These World Championship belts measure 4 feet 6 inches long, and weigh approximately 5 pounds. The Regualr version straps are made of simulated leather, and the Deluxe version straps are made of real leather. The medallions are ornamented by 30 simulated diamonds and rubies. Belts fit up to a 46 inch waist.

Regular Version belts $199.00
Regular Wrestling Belt..... FTCB1
Regular Boxing Belt..... FTCB2
Regular Martial Arts Belt... FTCB3

Deluxe Version belts $349.00
Deluxe Wrestling Belt..... FTCDB1
Deluxe Boxing Belt..... FTCDB2
Deluxe Martial Arts Belt... FTCDB3

JAKKS ACTION FIGURES

By Jakks Toys (1996-2002) 6 Inch Action Figures based on some of the most popular Superstars.

ALL JAKKS FIGURES ARE $15.00 each

Choose from:

Royal Rumble Pay-Per-View
Earl Hebner • Tazz • Triple H • William Regal • Chris Jericho • Ric Flair

Road To Wrestlemania
Chris Jericho • Chris Benoit • Undertaker
Buh Buh Ray Dudley • D-Von Dudley • Jeff Hardy

Real Re-Action Series 2
Steve Austin • The Rock • Edge
Big show • Undertaker • Jeff Hardy

Titan Tron Series 13
Willaim Regal • Molly Holly • Lita • Christian
Bob Holly • Justin Credible

Rebellion 4
Edge • Lita • X-Pac • Triple H • Raven
Billy Gunn • Chris Benoit

Rulers Of The Ring 4
Hardcore Holly • William Regal
Justin Credible • Christain
Molly Holly • Shane McMahon

Brock Lesnar King of the Ring 6 inch figure $15.00 each

Call For Other Jakks Figures We Carry Most Jakks Items

LEGENDS OF WRESTLING 6 INCH ACTION FIGURES

- Highly detailed with 3 to 6 points of articulation
- Compatible with other 6 inch action figures on the market
- Limited to only 5,000 and each figure comes mint on card

Choose from Regular Version or Bloody Versions of:

King Kong Bundy	Abdullah The Butcher	Bob Orton Jr
Killer Kowalski	Ivan Putski	Eddie Gilbert
Iron Sheik	Nikolai Volkoff	Kamala
Greg Valentine	Chief Jay Strongbow	Tony Atlas
WahooMcDaniel	Ricky Steamboat	Ox Baker
Captain Lou Albano	Baron Von Raschke	Referee
Ivan Koloff	Tito Santana	Original Sheik
Bruno Sammartino 70's	Billy Graham	Bruno Sammartino 60's

$8.00 each (2 for $15.00) or (any 20 for $100.00)

Jakks Kids Toy Belts

$18.00 each

Undisputed Belt
Cruiserweight Belt
The Rock Belt
Undertaker Belt
Stone Cold Skull Belt
Stone Cold Venom Belt
European Championship
Tag Team Championship
Intercontinental Championship
World Heavyweight Championship
Light Heavyweight Championship

Toy Belts

$19.00 each One Size Fits All or both for $25.00

Theses belts are goldtone plastic with a soft belt strap.

World Championship

INTERCONTINENTAL

Mystery Wrestler

The mystery wrestler comes with a regular body, a muscular body, 11 Legends of Professional Wrestling interchangable wrestler heads, 2 generic wrestler heads, a folding chair, referee shirt, event staff jacket, 2 mexican wrestling masks and a championship belt.

$20.00 Entire Deal

Full-Head Masks

These are soft vinyl full head masks.

choose from:

Steve Austin	$25.00 each
Kane	$35.00 each
Bret Hart	$5.00 each
Sycho Sid	$15.00 each
Mankind	$35.00 each
The Rock	$25.00 each
Vince McMahon	$25.00 each
Big Show	$35.00 each
X-Pac	$35.00 each
Triple H	$35.00 each
Chris Jericho	$25.00 each
Rikishi	$25.00 each

Arn Anderson 4 Ever:

A Look Behind The Curtain

A 164 page book written by Arn Andreson. The true story of Arns life and career.

$20.00 each or (2 for $35.00)

Mexican Wrestling Masks

These are full head masks.
choose from: $30.00 each

Juventud Guerrera
Rey Mysterio Jr.
Mil Marscaras
Ultimo Dragon
Lizmark Jr.
Super Calo
Psychosis

We Carry: WRESTLING Videos

Shoot Interview

Off The Streets

CD or Cassette $15.00 each

Badstreet USA

Adult T shirt M L XL XXL
$20.00 each

T-SHIRTS

All T-shirts made from 100% cotton.
Most shirts come in adult and kid sizes.

Adult T-shirts $20.00 each
Sizes Available M, L, XL, XXL
Kids T-shirts..$15.00 each
Sizes Available M, L, XL

WCW T-Shirts $15.00 each

Hulkster Tear-away (yellow & red)
Hollywood Hogan (NWO black)
Outsiders Logo T-Shirt
Hogan Doo-rag (yellow & red) $5.00

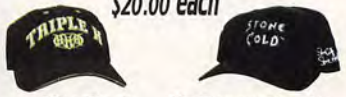
8X10 Photos

$5.00 each or (5 for $20.00)

Triple H	Steve Austin
The Rock	Undertaker Bad Ass
Kurt Angle	Hardy Boyz
Lita	Trish Stratus
Kane	Big Show
Jericho	Molly Holly
Taz	Al Snow

Baseball Caps

$20.00



The Rock — D-Generation X
HardyBoyz — Chris Jericho
Logo — Triple H
Undertaker (Dead Man Inc.)

Also Available:

Undertaker (Deadman Inc.)
Stone Cold Half Skull
American Badass (Undertaker)
Mankind & Socko
Kurt Angle "Its True"
Hardcore Holly
Steve Austin Bottom Line
The Rock People's Champ
Eddie Guerrero "Latino Heat"
Triple H (Damn Good)
The Rock "Poontang Pie
Undertaker "Last Ride"
Edge & Christian (5 Second Pose)
Booker T (Tell me)
Kane (Out of Fire)
Men of Wrestling
Stone Cold University
Tori Pretty Face
Brothers of Destruction
The Rock (Bring It)
Debra (Puppies)
Steve Austin No Mercy
Triple H "the Game"
Cactus Jack "Bang Bang"
Here Kitty Kitty
Too Cool "Graffitti"
Chris Benoit "Crippler"
"Save The Hos" Anti-Steven Richards
Kurt Angle (One of a kind)
Hardy Boyz & Lita (Team X-Treme)
Steve Austin Whoop Ass
Steve Austin Blood Rattle Snake
DX (Green Logo)
Steve Austin 3 Skulls
Undertaker Ministry
Steve Austin Oversized Skull
Kurt Angle "USA
The Rock Bull Logo
Road Dogg Kickin
Steven Richards
Hardy Boyz "2 Xtreme"
Steve Blackman "Pain"
Rob Van Dam "The Whole Dam Show"
Dudley Boyz (Table break)

JERSEYS $40.00 each

Adult Sizes M, L, XL, XXL

Baseball Jerseys:
Rock Bull
Smack Down Hotel
Stone Cold 3:16
Austin What!

Hockey Jerseys:
Logo
Steve Austin
Chris Jericho
The Rock
Hardy Boyz

Football Jerseys:
D-Generation X
Austin Rattlesnake
Chris Jericho • Triple H
Too Cool • Tazz
Austin 3:16 • The Rock Bull

PAYMENT TERMS: CHECKS, MONEY ORDERS, ALL MAJOR CREDIT CARDS, CASH. MAKE CHECKS PAYABLE TO WRESTLING SUPERSTORE.COM NO ORDER FORM NEEDED, JUST WRITE DOWN ORDER ON A PIECE OF PAPER AND SEND ALONG WITH PAYMENT 30 DAY RETURN MONEY BACK GUARANTEE

• ORDERS SHIPPED SAME DAY RECEIVED
• INTERNATIONAL ORDERS WELCOMED
(ADD $25.00 S/H PER TOTAL ORDER)

United States Shipping:
($1.00 to $50.00 add $6.00) ($50.01 to $99.99 add $7.00)
($100.00 to $199.99 add $10.00) ($200.00 & over add $12.00)

48 PAGE FULL-COLOR WRESTLING CATALOG: SEND $3.00 FOR A COPY

before the bell

Compiled by Will Welsh

Definitions For Dummies

Wrestling officials in many promotions (including WWE) are said to be very upset with the way that "insider knowledge" has exposed the business in recent years. They lament that this has led some fans to become too openly critical of an industry of which they have little working knowledge, while at the same time making it tremendously difficult to please those fans.

We here at "Before The Bell" agree wholeheartedly, which is why this month, we're here to dumb you down, because, as many wrestling executives believe, a "dumb" fan makes the best fan. The following is a list of the some most commonly used insider terms and what we think you should believe they mean. Believe us, you won't find these definitions in any dictionary.

Angle *(n.)* 1. First name Kurt. The only Olympic gold medalist to compete for WWE in its glorious history. 2. If properly constructed, the four corners of the ring make four 90-degree angles. Wrestlers will say, "Wow! What a great angle!" to members of the ring crew if they believe the crew did an exemplary job constructing the ring.

Arm color *(n.)* 1. What Jeff Hardy has as he makes his way to the ring. It usually becomes chest, head, and leg color as it rubs off on his opponent.

Baby *(n.)* What Christian becomes every time he loses a match. [*Syn.* for crybaby]

Blown up *(adj.)* 1. The state of wrestling entrance ramps after especially strong pyrotechnic displays. 2. What Bradshaw hopes any country who opposes the United States looks like after we're through with it.

Booker *(n.)* Booker T's first name. Consider "T" to be his last name.

Bump *(n.)* A dance motion. Often attributed to Stacy Keibler's bump and grind.

Carried him to a great match *(v.)* Some wrestlers work out so often and so rigorously that they commonly have to be carried to their matches. When a wrestler who wrestles a great match had to be carried to the arena, he has been "carried to a great match."

Dusty finish *(adj.)* Any time a match ends thanks to interference by "The American Dream" Dusty Rhodes.

Face *(n.)* The part of the body that is most often kicked by the heel.

Go home *(v.)* What wrestlers do after a show has wrapped up. Also what fans who insist on hanging around after shows to try to talk to the wrestlers are encouraged to do by security.

Hard way *(adj.)* Making it to WWE by working your way up through the independent circuit, not by appearing on *Tough Enough.*

Heel *(n.)* The part of the body that most often strikes the face.

High spot *(n.)* Euphemism for the four top turnbuckles—the highest four spots in a ring.

Mark *(n.)* What a wrestler does when he executes a move correctly: He hits his mark!

Potato *(n.)* A good source of subsistence for wrestlers adhering to a tight budget.

Shoot *(exc.)* What wrestlers are commonly overheard saying after screwing up a move or an entire match. Usually preceded by "Aw!" such as in "Aw, shoot!"

Squash *(n.)* A good source of subsistence for wrestlers adhering to a tight budget.

Work rate *(n.)* The fee a wrestler charges an independent promoter to wrestle (or work) on his show.

Talkin' Trash

Here's a list of the top 10 wrestling-related things you've been talking about lately and our gut reaction to each.

10. Bill Goldberg finally debuts for WWE. **Guess that Nathan Jones project isn't going so well.**

9. Brock Lesnar's nearly breaks his neck executing a shooting star press at WrestleMania XIX. **Never again, please.**

8. Sable returns to WWE. **Question: Who is the bigger hypocrite? Vince McMahon for bringing her back less than four years after she filed a nine-figure lawsuit against the company, or Sable for coming back less than four years after filing a nine-figure lawsuit against the company?**

7. "Rowdy" Roddy Piper returns to WWE. Answer: **Piper is the bigger hypocrite. Sable was putting the badmouth on WWE years ago, but Piper was doing it, what, yesterday?**

6. Sting is reportedly set to debut in WWE during the summer. **Wouldn't it have made more sense to bring him in during the invasion storyline of the summer of *2001?* And haven't we asked that question before?**

5. The Hardy Boyz' biography initially sells more copies than Hulk Hogan's. **No, this does not mean that Shannon Moore's biography is in the works—not yet, anyway.**

4. Steve Austin is forced into semi-retirement. ***What?!***

3. NWA-TNA officials move closer to getting a regular cable-television deal. **We'll believe it when we see it, right, XWF?**

2. Rumors swirl concerning UFC competitor Tito Ortiz possibly signing with WWE. **We doubt it will happen, but if it does, Ortiz has to work out better than Tank Abbott. He has to!**

1. Mick Foley attempts to sell his car on eBay for charity. **Well, it's probably safer and in much better condition than most of the other things we've seen wrestlers try to sell on eBay in recent years.**

The Internet Insider

The following news items were culled from various wrestling-related Web sites—or were they? See if you can pick out the two items that were actually reported on the Internet (which doesn't necessarily mean that they are true) and the two that we blatantly made up. The answers appear at the end of the column on page 11.

1. Get prepared for a full-fledged rap invasion in WWE. According to multiple sources, Insane Clown Posse (Violent J and Shaggy 2 Dope), who wrestled briefly for both WWE and WCW in the late-1990s, have been signed to WWE contracts. The plan is to have them feud with and get the upper hand on John Cena, only to have Master P, who had a short stint with WCW a couple of years ago, join the fight on Cena's side. Negotiations are continuing with other semi-famous rap stars who are willing to at least consider becoming part of the storyline that is designed to elevate Cena to the top tier of WWE.

2. Former WCW World champion Lex Luger is in talks with WWE. Luger has been speaking off and on with Vince McMahon over the telephone, and the only thing keeping Luger out of WWE at this point is money. If the two parties can come to terms financially, Luger is expected to immediately join Smackdown's roster, where he'll oppose Nathan Jones.

3. During a radio interview, Randy "Macho Man" Savage talked about his new Web site, machoman.com. Basically, Savage said that it's going to be an online wrestling promotion. He said Triple-H told him to "get with the times" and "quit living in the past," and Savage feels like this is something that everyone will be doing in the future. His plan is to hold matches in an empty arena and broadcast them on the Internet as opposed to television.

4. Even though Al Wilson's character (who is actually Torrie Wilson's father in real life) was killed off, Mr. Wilson and his lovely TV bride, Dawn Marie, have been spotted backstage at *Smackdown* snuggling on several occasions. Nobody has had enough guts to ask the two what is going on, and poor Torrie is attempting to do her best just to ignore what seems like the obvious at this point.

The Stupid Files

Given the current rash of injuries to so many of WWE's major stars, WWE officials and wrestlers have gone on record to say that the company has asked wrestlers to tone down their use of high-impact and high-risk maneuvers. The directive makes sense, because once it's in place, it will benefit both WWE and its wrestlers. For WWE's part, the company should be able to cut down on time lost due to injury, something that has plagued WWE over the past year with injuries to Steve Austin, Kurt Angle, Edge, and others. And not only will the wrestlers' careers be extended, they'll be around to collect more house show and pay-per-view payoffs.

That being the case, WWE's decision to allow Brock Lesnar to attempt the shooting star press at WrestleMania XIX was mind-boggling. Sure, Lesnar had successfully used it many times before in OVW and had been practicing it in the days leading up to WrestleMania, but he had never done it on a stage as large as WrestleMania or after wrestling a grueling 20-minute match. He simply wasn't prepared to do the maneuver, and he should have stopped himself as soon as he hesitated to climb the turnbuckles—and he obviously did hesitate.

When Lesnar landed on his head, the entire wrestling community gasped in horror. When he immediately got up and F5'd Angle for the win, we were in shock. When he groggily stared into the camera wondering where the hell he was, we were scared. When we went to sleep, we had nightmares. But most of all, after we learned that he was going to be okay, we were dumbfounded that WWE would let one of its most popular stars take such a risk. Let's hope that failed shooting star press is the last shooting star press we ever see from "The Next Big Thing."

Now, on to something a little more light-hearted: just plain ol' stupidity. Correct us if we're wrong, but on the February 3 edition of *Raw,* didn't Goldust and Booker T make a pact to split up and never team again following their loss to Raw tag team champions William Regal and Lance Storm? We'll answer our own question: Yes, they did, and it was quite a moving segment as they said their goodbyes.

Of course, leave it to professional wrestling, which forgets the stipulations of retirement matches as soon as the pin has been counted, to cheese up a good thing. Less than two months after that loss, Goldust and Booker were once again teaming, this time in a match against Ric Flair and Triple-H.

Two months. So much for storyline continuity.

Nathan Jones. The *next* next big thing. WWE signed him because he's huge and looks impressive, like he could tear the head off nearly any opponent. However, as of press time, he still hadn't wrestled his first televised match for WWE—nearly two months after his first appearance. Jones was scheduled to wrestle Chuck Palumbo on the March 27 edition of *Smackdown,* but that match was squashed after Jones attacked Palumbo backstage. Then came WrestleMania and the scheduled match pitting Jones and The Undertaker against A-Train and The Big Show. Thanks to a *Sunday Night Heat* beatdown from The Full-Blooded Italians, Jones didn't make that match, either. He settled for a run-in. Makes you wonder how much confidence WWE officials have in him, doesn't it?

We Heard That!

"I think I have the ability to pull it off. It's not an easy move by any means. I mean, it's no headlock, but I don't think it's any worse than a German suplex. But the fact is, on the Raw roster, there's not much guys that I can give it to anyway. They're all so big, so it's not such a big deal anyway."

—The Hurricane, discussing WWE's decision to ban his vertebreaker maneuver, on *Byte This,* WWE's Internet radio show

"A grain of truth turns into a mountain of fact. The people who write the Internet have nothing better to do than create rumors and build on rumors. It's all b.s. Ric's a great guy and a great friend and a consummate professional."

—Eric Bischoff, shooting down rumors that he and Ric Flair had gotten into a backstage scuffle at *Raw,* at the WrestleMania XIX press conference

"I started to resent [WWE's writers] so much. A lot of it probably isn't even justified. I just got so frustrated that I would look at them and think, *You [expletives]. You sit in your room ... you have everybody's career in your hands and you don't even care ...* And just feeling like, *What in the hell do you know about this business? What*

the hell do you know about what I've done in this business? It started to eat me up."

—Justin Credible, offering up his opinion of WWE's writing staff, in an interview with the *Pro Wrestling Torch*

"I had to drive straight through without sleeping. I had to make myself vomit to stay awake."

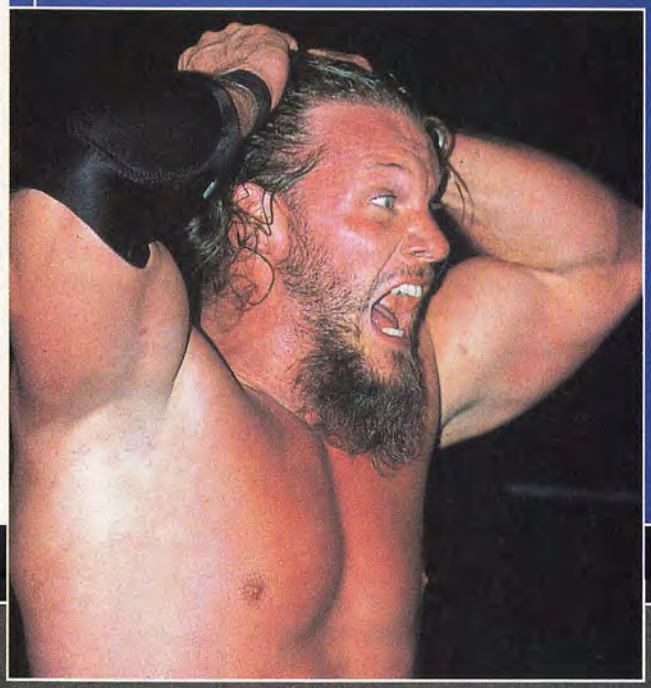
—Brian Kendrick, discussing an interesting (and not very safe) way of making himself stay awake during a cross-country road trip, on wwe.com

"It's very hard when you give your best effort and it wasn't good enough. That's an even bigger pill to swallow. Your ego is bruised to be let go, especially when you consider that you're not one of the chosen players anymore. Things like that are difficult, but retiring is probably the furthest thing from my mind. It was just a possibility. Somebody recently coined me the hottest free agent in the business. That's a good feeling, too. I'm getting calls all the time and it's been very good for my ego."

—D-Lo Brown, discussing his post-WWE options, in an interview with wrestlingobserver.com

caption me!

Think you're a better writer than the editors at *PWI*? Here's your chance to prove it, punk! This photo of an exasperated Chris Jericho needs a short, concise, and downright uproarious caption. If you think you're up to the task, e-mail your zany quips to PWIFocus@aol.com, or slap a stamp on an envelope and snail-mail it to "Caption Me!" Box 1148, Fort Washington, PA 19034. Three issues from now, we'll share with you the best of the bunch—and the funnier the better.



April's Best

"Tommy Dreamer packed me a sack lunch! Thanks, Tommy!"

—Walter Petty, Evansville, IN

"Where is that best of Al Snow tape? Maybe it's in the garbage. Oh, wait a second. There is no such thing as a best of Al Snow tape!"

—Jason Mackouse, jmackouse@aol.com

"Look, it's Al Snow's career!"

—Chris Berry, Wyoming, MI

"So *this* is where they sent Jackie Gayda after that God-awful match on *Raw*..."

—Robert Payes, stiffshots@wrestlezone.com

"Listen up! I can talk trash with the best of them!"

—Lee Fitchett, Timonium, MD

"Midian? Viscera? What are you two doing in there?"

—Jason Bonzano, luchamisfit73@aol.com

Answers to Internet Insider:

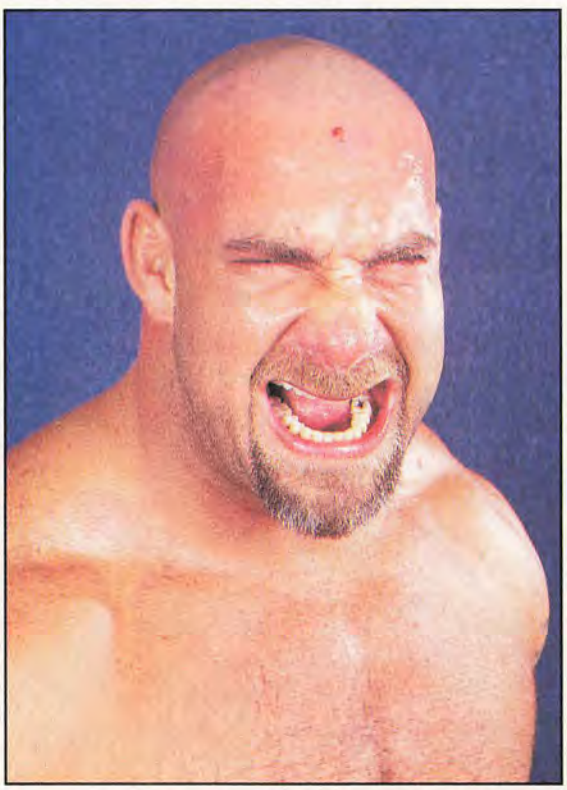
Items 1 and 4 are totally made up.

ringside

With Will Welsh

AT WRESTLEMANIA XIX, **Shawn Michaels** beat **Chris Jericho** in one of the best matches of both of their careers, Raw champion **Triple-H** beat **Booker T** as expected, **Hulk Hogan** prevailed over a bloodied **Vince McMahon** in the best possible match these two could have had, **The Rock** defeated **"Stone-Cold" Steve Austin** in probably the last chapter of their long-running feud, and **Brock Lesnar** defeated Smackdown champion **Kurt Angle** to win the title, nearly killing himself in the process. However, despite all those important doings, WWE's truly big news of the early spring didn't occur at WrestleMania. Instead, WWE decided to blow the top off the company the Monday and Tuesday after WrestleMania, at the *Raw* and *Smackdown* tapings.

Former WCW World champion **Bill Goldberg** debuted first on the Raw side, and that was followed one night later by the return of **Sable**, the most controversial WWE diva ever. We'll begin our look at WWE's new landscape by breaking down Raw's signing of Goldberg and what it means for that brand.



Menacing scowl and all, Bill Goldberg finally debuted in WWE on the night after WrestleMania. If used correctly, he could yet be a megastar for the company and have huge matches with the likes of Steve Austin and Triple-H. That's still a huge "if," however.

First, before we can do anything else, we have to examine how Goldberg was brought in. During the WrestleMania broadcast, WWE announced his signing by showing a promotional video for his appearance at the Backlash pay-per-view. Then, the following night on *Raw,* while The Rock expounded on how he had beaten everyone and accomplished everything a professional wrestler could hope to do, Goldberg strode proudly onto the stage and made his way to the ring before screaming, "You're next!" He proceeded to drill "The Great One" into the mat with a devastating spear—all while the Seattle crowd roared its raucous approval.

Given the way the live crowd accepted Goldberg's WWE debut, his signing would seem to promise great things for WWE's future. However, that might or might not be the case, and it all depends on how "Da Man" is booked.

Goldberg made his name in WCW by piling up a huge winning streak against (mostly) the company's mid-carders. Usually, Goldberg speared and jackhammered them in less than three minutes. Rare was the Goldberg match that last beyond the 10-minute mark. Both of those points are of concern.

Raw doesn't have the extensive mid-card roster that WCW had, and even if it did, with the way that Goldberg was immediately scheduled to face The Rock at Backlash, it quickly became apparent that Goldberg wasn't going to slowly build up steam before challenging the company's top stars. He was getting thrown into the main-event mix from the start, which might or might not pan out.

Why wouldn't it? Well, that takes us to point number two. In WCW, Goldberg's matches generally lasted less than five minutes; most were over in under three. That's not going to be the case in WWE, especially when he's thrust into matches with a top-tier talent like The Rock. In order to get over and stay over with a fan base that has generally rejected most people and things WCW (see **Scott Steiner**), Goldberg is going to have to prove that he can do more than just wrestle the squash match.

I think he can, but I wouldn't be surprised if Goldberg's initial push is rockier than expected. If things do work out well for him, matches with Austin and Triple-H could be huge.

Now we come to Sable, the WWE diva who helped changed the course of WWE's business by taking WWE "Attitude" to a whole new level. By frequently appearing on magazine shows like *Extra* and *Entertainment Tonight* and becoming the first WWE diva to appear in

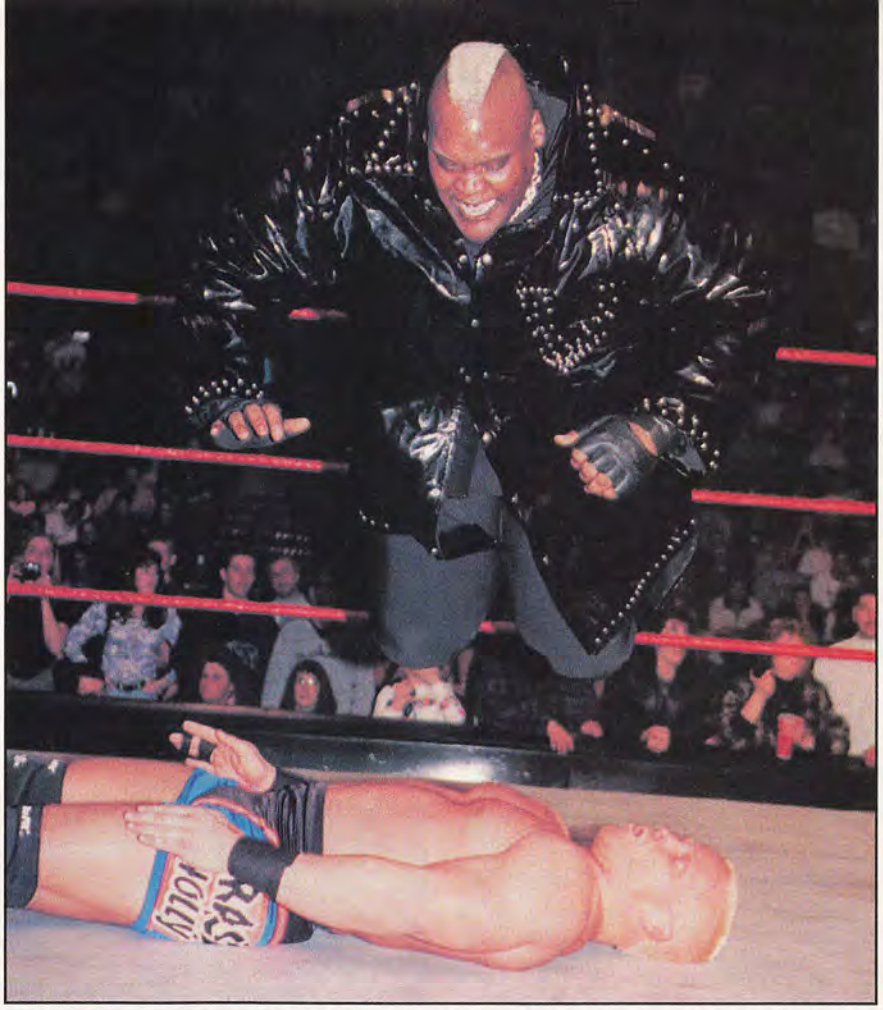
Playboy, she legitimately became a pop culture icon.

Things went sour between WWE and Sable in June 1999, when she filed a $110-million lawsuit against the company, claiming negligence, breach of contract, unfair trade practices, and intentional infliction of emotional distress. She claimed that she was stripped of the women's title for refusing to participate in a storyline in which her breasts would have been exposed on cable television, and she also said that she was pressured to participate in a lesbian storyline, which she says she refused to do. After negotiations, Sable and WWE settled out of court for an undisclosed sum.

How WWE and Sable mended fences, we'll probably never know (it's worth noting that in her first appearance back, she gave **Torrie Wilson** a quick kiss), but it also doesn't matter. She's back, and WWE officials are hopeful that she'll draw back some old fans. I'm not so sure that's going to happen.

Sure, Sable was the number-one diva in WWE in her time, but her time was more than four years ago, and a lot of things have changed since then. First, she's gotten four years older, and while there's not one heterosexual man who would say that she's unattractive, she has more of that "hot mom" appeal than anything else (not that there's anything wrong with hot moms!).

Apparently Sable is willing to give Vince McMahon and WWE one more chance. The fact that she rejoined WWE proves that McMahon will do business with anyone he thinks can make his company money. But can Sable really do that at this point?



Bet you thought you'd seen the last of Viscera when last you saw him in WWE. But NWA-TNA located him and brought him in as one of the company's famous surprises in March. The "surprise" storylines are starting to get a bit old.

All that being said, I'm very interested to find out what it is that WWE believes Sable offers right now. She was never a great wrestler, and her acting skills were a bit suspect as well, so this could be a pretty entertaining study of WWE's motives, even if it doesn't work.

Let's shift from WWE to NWA-TNA, which has greatly improved its shows in recent months. One of the most interesting TNA innovations has been the use of its weekly surprise debuts. While some have been rather disappointing (see **Nelson "Mabel/Viscera" Knight**), most have worked well. **D-Lo Brown** and **Perry Saturn**, for example complement the company well. I only have two critiques of this formula: First, TNA officials are going to run out of A-list names (and maybe even B-list names) sooner rather than later, and the company's audience, expecting bigger names, might rebel.

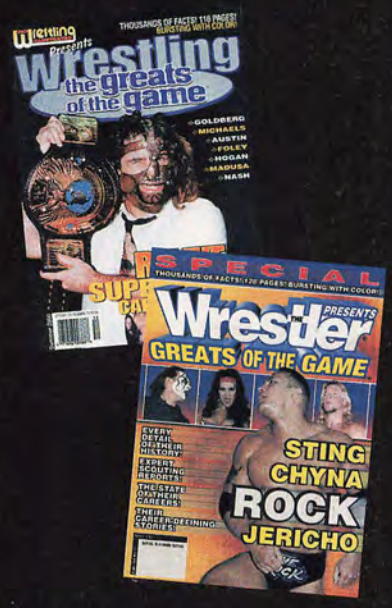
The other problem with the weekly surprise additions to the TNA roster is that the roster is getting too big. You don't know who is going to be on the pay-per-view from week to week, and it's starting to hurt the promotion's reliability. In fact, TNA was so flooded with talent this spring that **Ron "The Truth" Killings**, one of the company's most effective champions in its brief history, went a couple of weeks without seeing ring action, and that's simply unacceptable.

Believe it or not, fans, the "doc-

(Continued on page 14)

THE GREATS OF THE GAME

RELIVE THE SUPERSTARS' CAREERS



THOUSANDS OF FORGOTTEN FACTS!
HUNDREDS OF COLOR PHOTOS!

ORDER NOW
WHILE SUPPLIES LAST!

☐ **PWI Presents** (Summer 2000): Foley, Goldberg, Austin, Hogan, Madusa, Nash. 116 all-color pages.

☐ **The Wrestler Presents** (April 2001): Rock, Sting, Chyna, Jericho. 128 all-color pages.

Please send me the issues I've checked above! I am enclosing **$7.95** per copy (postage included) as payment in full.

Please send check or money order only to:

London Publishing Co.
P.O. Box 910
Ft. Washington, PA 19034

Print your name and address clearly

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____

STATE _____ ZIP _____

For all orders outside the U.S. and Canada, you must add $1 for every copy to be delivered by surface mail or $2 for every copy to be delivered by airmail. International money orders in U.S. funds only. Please allow 6-8 weeks for delivery.

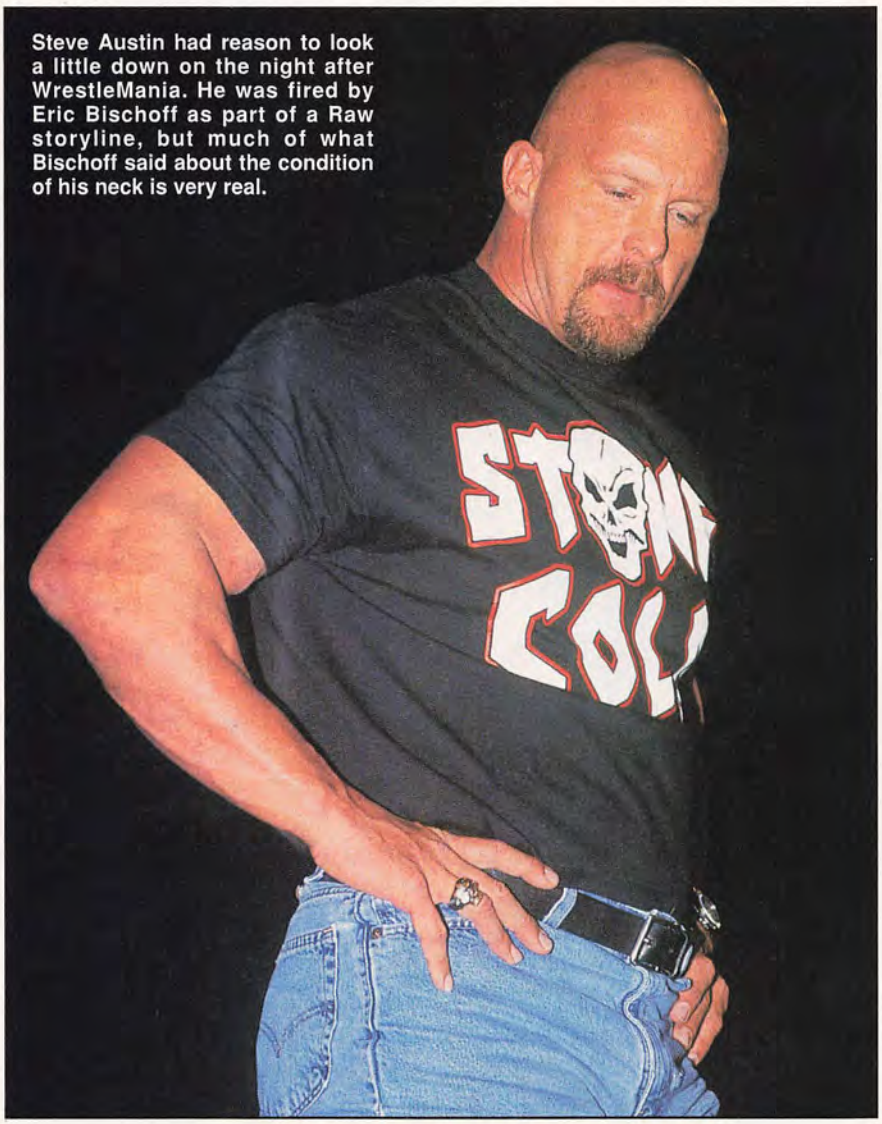
5647/05-01/4c

(Continued from page 13)

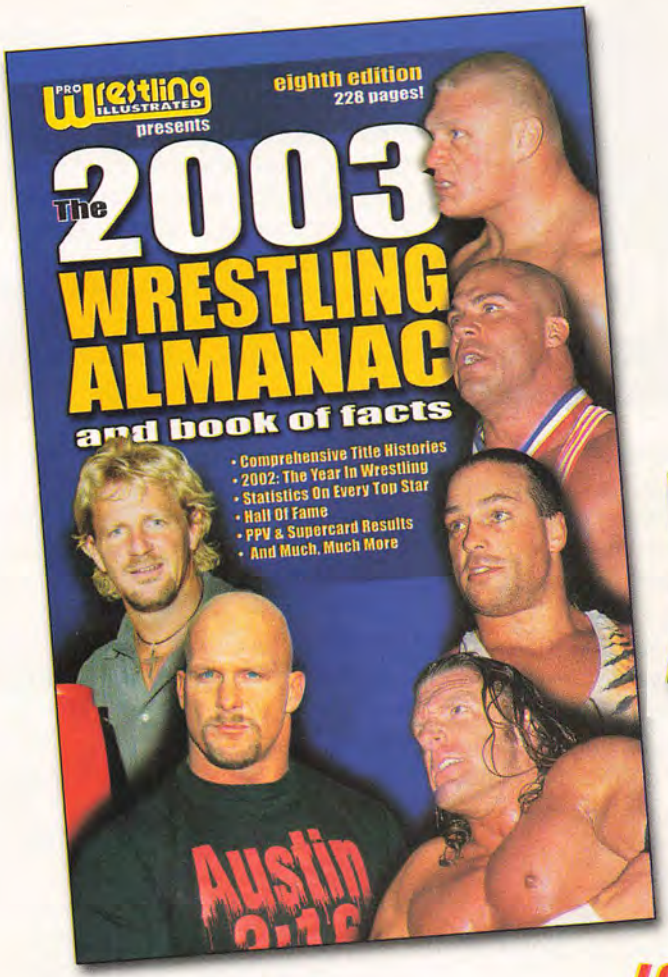
tor's note" that Raw General Manager **Eric Bischoff** read when he fired "Stone-Cold" Steve Austin on *Raw* on March 31 was closer to the truth than you might think. Austin's neck continues to give him problems, even after bone fusion surgery. "The Rattlesnake" will likely remain a fixture on WWE TV, and he might wrestle every now and then (I have no doubt that they'll be an eventual match between Austin and Goldberg), but Austin's full-time in-ring career is assumed to be over.

Jim Ross, *Raw* announcer and WWE vice president of talent relations, might soon be scaling back some of his duties on the talent relations end of his responsibilities. Given that he's been pulling double-duty for years now, Ross' desire to work a slightly less hectic schedule is certainly understandable. Luckily for WWE, **John Laurinaitis (Johnny Ace)** and **Dave "Fit" Finlay** should be able to step into roles that Ross leaves behind.

That does it for me this month, fans. Enjoy your wanderings. □



Steve Austin had reason to look a little down on the night after WrestleMania. He was fired by Eric Bischoff as part of a Raw storyline, but much of what Bischoff said about the condition of his neck is very real.



THE 2003 PRO Wrestling ILLUSTRATED WRESTLING ALMANAC

THIS DIGEST-SIZED CHUNK OF HISTORY HAS IT ALL! WE'RE TALKING 228 PAGES OF REFERENCE MATERIAL! UPDATED!

LOADED WITH NEW INFORMATION!

IT'S THE ULTIMATE WRESTLING REFERENCE BOOK!

- >Statistics for hundreds of wrestlers worldwide!
- >Comprehensive title histories of the sport's top championships–active and inactive!
- >Historical rundown on pay-per-views and supercards!
- >Analysis of the 10 biggest news stories of 2002!
- >*The Wrestling Observer* Hall of Fame
- >>*Much, much more!*

On Sale At Local Newsstands!

If you can't find it ORDER IT!

☒ **YES!** I would like to order my copy of the *2003 PWI Almanac.* I have enclosed $7 in check or money order (postage included) as payment in full.

Send To:
London Publishing Co.
P.O. Box 910
Ft. Washington, PA 19034

Name_____

Address_____

_____ Apt.____

City_____ State____ Zip____

For all orders outside the U.S., you must add $1.50 for every issue to be sent surface mail, and $3 for every issue to be sent airmail. International money order in U.S. funds only. Please allow 6-8 weeks for delivery.

6051/02-03

in focus

By Dave Lenker

CHANGE IT UP!

Another WrestleMania has passed, the hype machine has shifted out of overdrive, and now we just have to worry about how in the name of Triple-H WWE is going to produce eight compelling *brand-exclusive* pay-per-views per year. I don't have a simple plan to make that work just yet, but since the next 'Mania is 10 long months away and this is the time of year in which new WWE storylines are supposed to be cultivated, I do have thoughts on what can be done to freshen up 10 of the more prominent players in McMahonland.

Steve Austin: Since Eric Bischoff is fed up with him, let's arrange a blockbuster deal. Let this play out over at least a few weeks as the Bisch makes it known Austin is on the trading block and he will listen to whatever offers Stephanie McMahon is willing to make for him. Some wrestlers could talk about wanting to be dealt to Raw, while others could offer reasons why they'd be worried about changing teams in such a swap. It would make for interesting interbrand interaction, it would allow us to avoid another chapter of Austin vs. Triple-H, and would likely keep "Stone-Cold" out of any more of tired rebel vs. heel GM/owner/commissioner/chief of staff/prime minister storylines (assuming that wouldn't play out again in the form of Austin vs. Steph). You might even freshen up a few secondary characters by accident.

The Rock: Maybe someone can convince him that resuming a full-time wrestling career is much more enticing than a chance to become a very rich and famous Hollywood star. How hard could that be? Beyond impossible, you say? That's unfortunate, because I was starting to miss him just knowing he'd be leaving wrestling again by the end of April.

The Undertaker: I respect him for making Nathan Jones his project. I'm just not convinced the excitable Aussie is a worthwhile project for anyone in WWE just yet (OVW maybe, but not WWE). I was hoping to see a Chris Benoit-Undertaker match at 'Mania this year, with "The Crippler" getting a clean win over "The Dead Man" and ending his heralded WM unbeaten streak in dramatic fashion. UT belongs in storylines with guys who need that last little boost up to main-event level (read: Benoit). Let's just keep him out of the Smackdown title picture.

Kane: If he's not going to remove the mask, there's not much I can offer here. He's turned heel and babyface enough over the past few years that it doesn't matter much which side he's on. I feel like I'm watching a robot in the ring when I watch Kane now. Ditching the mask would give him a desperately needed opportunity to develop additional

As a general rule, digging up old gimmicks and old ideas is not a good idea, though there are exceptions to every rule, and Stacy Keibler's Miss Hancock persona would be one of them, according to Dave Lenker. He wants to see it revisited in WWE.

The last time Ric Flair wrestled Triple-H, it happened on *Raw* and was given roughly one hour of buildup. Lenker suggests that Flair, even at age 54, could yet make a viable opponent for "The Game" under the right circumstances.

layers of his personality. Why do I feel as if I've made this request before, and that I'll make it again ... and again ... and probably again?

Rob Van Dam: Where can he go now that Triple-H has proven him not worthy of the Raw championship? Neither a partnership nor a feud with Kane will advance his WWE career much, I'm afraid. Assuming a trade to Smackdown is not a possibility, I'm not sure what can be done with RVD other than to continue feeding him athletic opponents with whom he can have entertaining matches. There are worse fates for WWE wrestlers. It's a shame that he can't deliver an intense, serious promo.

Triple-H: He, his future wife, and his future father-in-law could all use a month-long vacation from the entire business. They're three of the most powerful people in WWE, yet as the ratings continue to slide and everyone gets more desperate, all three are in serious need of time off to clear their minds and/or recharge their muscles.

Stacy Keibler: Two years after she was introduced to WWE fans, the leggy one is still in search of her niche in the company. Vince McMahon's assistant? "The Duchess Of Dudleyville"? Test's marketing director? What's next? Comedy sure isn't a strong suit for her. Neither is being a babyface. I think she still has the Miss Hancock outfits hanging in the back of her closet. Make her the secretary-with-an-attitude to Triple-H or another strong heel. Give her a bodyguard (Kevin Nash?) to make sure she is protected from attacks by angry fan favorites, for a while at least. While we're at it, let's turn Torrie Wilson heel and have some fun with her on the Smackdown side, too.

Brock Lesnar: I would have preferred to see heel Brock vs. babyface Kurt Angle at WrestleMania this year. Lesnar works much better as the hunted than he does as the hunter. And I think people were finally ready to get behind Angle before he double-crossed them again after winning the Smackdown gold at Armageddon. Now we have at least a few months to wait to watch that type of scenario play out. In the meantime, let's see all the "Next Big Thing" hype go to Lesnar's head. Have him turn into a cocky heel who thinks he's invincible and is out to not only beat his competition, but put that competition out of commission. The perfect babyface foil for Lesnar? None other than John Cena, whose amazing raps are getting cheered already.

Chris Benoit: It's a shame the classic Benoit had with Kurt Angle at the Royal Rumble didn't happen in, say, May. Vince McMahon might have been tempted to finally push "The Crippler" to the very top after hearing the standing ovation he got after *losing* to Angle at that show. But WrestleMania was but two months away at the time, and he already had visions of Angle vs. Lesnar dancing in his head. Benoit wasn't going to be one of the WM headliners this year. But I'd like to see where Benoit's career would stand when WrestleMania XX rolled around if he were to sign with the world's slimiest agent, Paul Heyman, by this summer and Heyman were to guide his career (and his career only) for a good six months or more. Maybe then Vince would buy into him as a headliner.

Ric Flair: Give him one last decent babyface run. If promoted correctly, a Triple-H-Ric Flair match could be a decent draw, especially when we can watch Flair's frustration with having such a limited role in WWE today build over a period of months. After turning good, the "Nature Boy" would need a protege, a young stud like Randy Orton or Sean O'Haire who could learn from him and support him. Then, if Flair ultimately came up short in a PPV showdown with Triple-H (and despite a valiant effort, he probably would), the protege could step in and take up the fight for him, possibly with Flair still guiding his career. Triple-H willing, the young protege could develop into a major player on his own fairly quickly. Oh, and by the way, I'd authorize unlimited *"Whoooooo-ing!"* from "Naitch" and give him plenty of microphone time every Monday night.

(Have a comment or question about "In Focus" or anything else you see in ***PWI?*** *You can contact Dave Lenker via e-mail at PWIFocus@aol.com.)* □

off the top rope

By Brandi Mankiewicz

If you wish to contribute to Brandi's mailbag, send your letters to:
TOP ROPE Box 1148 Ft. Washington, PA 19034
Or send e-mail to: **offthetoprope@yahoo.com**

(Editor's note: The opinions expressed in this column are those of the letter writers and Brandi Mankiewicz herself. They do not necessarily reflect the editorial views of this magazine.)

WHAT THE HELL is going on here? Sable is back, Goldberg's in WWE, Piper shows up at WrestleMania, and it's snowing in April. I better check with "Fallen Angel" Christopher Daniels to make sure everything is all right down in our home territory. If it's snowing in this cesspool called Philadelphia, I'm sure it's a bit nippy in hell, since it's right next door.

Sable gets a contract. What a colossal waste of money! Sable wasn't worth her weight in silicone four years ago, so why bring her back now—when she's four years older? Goldberg's just a big, pampered brat who doesn't know the meaning of hard work. As for Piper, well, he's just insane. Hell, I'd take a bloated Tammy Sytch over those three any day, because she's at least an interesting drama queen. And we know Tammy's willing to strip for $16.95 a month, so chances are we'd see racier storylines.

All of this wackiness proves a point, though: Anything can happen. It also proves that no matter how much you whine, bitch, or sue, Vince will still take you back. The deeper the knife is embedded in Vince's back, the more spread his arms are for a welcome back hug. I just feel badly for all the wrestlers out there who now have even less of a chance of getting signed.

Don't worry, kiddies, I would never force-feed you yesterday's stars, unless it's in an obituary form. It's only the best for you. After all, I am your ever-vigilant champion.

Dear Ms. Mankiewicz:

While there is nothing wrong with being a fan of Jazz and/or Victoria (they are both very talented competitors), I don't see why you have to take catty potshots at Trish Stratus and Joanie Laurer at every opportunity you get. Your most recent comments on Joanie Laurer, suggesting that she slept her way to attain her career achievements, were something akin to what the bitchiest of high school football cheerleaders would say. To say this was irresponsible journalism on your part would be quite the understatement. Shame on you, Ms. Mankiewicz!

JAKEY EMMERT
jakeyintampa@yahoo.com

Dear Jakey:

Uh, were we reading the same column? I never implied that at all. It's equally irresponsible for you to accuse me of suggesting that Joanie Laurer slept with anyone. I don't know where you got that from, because it wasn't in my copy. The closest I came to that was stating she got her job because of Triple-H. Maybe you should get an updated version of the "English-To-Redneck" dictionary so you can correctly translate my language into yours. But, hey, I didn't just piss you off. I apparently pissed off a few more. Read on:

Here's Joanie Laurer with another waste of oxygen, Bob Sapp. This photo was taken in Japan, where both of them should stay.

Dear Brandi,

I read the response you gave Ian, and let me tell you, you are dead wrong about Joanie Laurer. You said all she did was stand next to her boyfriend Hunter, and that's how she got in to the WWF/E. You also said that Victoria is smart, talented, and beautiful. So I guess you're saying Joanie isn't smart and isn't talented or beautiful.

First off, Joanie trained with men at Killer Kowalski's wrestling school. When Victoria first came to the WWE, all she did was come to the ring as one of The Godfather's hos. Joanie went to college and served in the Peace Corps. Joanie is very talented. If she wasn't, she wouldn't have wrestled men in the WWE and become the first female Intercontinental champion or compete in King of the Ring and the Royal Rumble. She also wouldn't have been the num-

Tazz likes this cushy job much better than actually working for a paycheck. The only downside is that he's stuck sitting next to Michael Cole for several hours a week.

ber-one contender for the World heavyweight title. Joanie also wouldn't have been on TV shows such as *Third Rock From The Sun*, *Mad TV*, *Pacific Blue*, and *Tracker*. I could go on with the TV shows. If Joanie wasn't beautiful, she wouldn't have been on the cover of *Playboy* twice.

MATT
Chynasyndrome@aol.com

Dear Matt,

I'm not wrong about Joanie or Victoria. While Joanie did accomplish a lot during her little tenure in Vinceland, I believe Victoria is much more talented, has more potential, and is also more genuine. Yes, you were introduced to her as a ho, but she had already been a wrestler for some time at that point. As for Joanie's little college/Peace Corps gigs, I trump that with Victoria's gig as an organ tissue harvester. While Joanie was conjugating verbs in her Spanish classes, Victoria was busy removing corneas and heart valves for transplant patients. It also doesn't take beauty to be on the cover of *Playboy*. Sable proved that one.

Hello,

When Scotty Too Hotty and Grandmaster Sexay were in WWE, they were my favorite wrestlers, but now they have left. Can you tell me if they are still wrestling? If they are, what company are they with, and what names are they wrestling under? I would really appreciate it.

Thanks a lot,
JARED NAFF
scfan284@msn.com

Jared,

Hello. I suggest digging up your original copy of the above letter. Take note of the editorial changes I had to make in order for your letter to read at a second grade level. Now, Scotty Too Hotty is still under contract with WWE. He's been recovering from neck surgery since last May. Grandmaster Sexay was released in 2001 and has been toiling on the independent scene ever since. If you're still a glutton for punishment, you can watch him act like a goof (as Brian Lawler) on NWA-TNA's pay-per-views.

Dear Brandi,

I have been reading *PWI* and its sister publications for nearly 20 years, and I remember reading Dan Shocket back then, and his views would absolutely piss people off, but I really enjoyed his writings. This is just a short note to say thanks for keeping his views of the business going.

C.J. SANTINI
santinihome@earthlink.net

Dear C.J.,

Finally, a letter from someone who gets it!

Letter of the month (taken verbatim from the actual letter to share my torture with you all):

WHY DON'T TAZZ WRESTLE ANYMORE?

KEITH NOLEN
keith.nolen@my2way.com

?,

He doesn't meet the new height requirements for a standard size wrestler. Under this new statute, one must be a certain height to be considered a real wrestler. Otherwise, that person must either wear a mask or costume. Why else would Rey Misterio Jr. come back to mainstream wrestling wearing his mask again? Remasking may go against Lucha law, but it was the only way he could collect a fat paycheck from Vince. Tazz refused to bring back the old Tasmaniac gimmick and he's being punished for it by being assigned a seat next to Michael Cole. □

krew-cuts

By Frank Krewda

***Playboy* and playgirls.** Since a sizable number of *PWI* readers are under the age of 18, advising them to run out and buy *Playboy* just to see Torrie Wilson bare all would put me on the same moral plane as the neighborhood degenerate who buys beer for the local teenagers loitering outside the liquor store.

Four years ago, the Meros (Rena and Marc) were so against doing certain racy storylines and so offended by the treatment of Rena (Sable) that she filed a $110-million lawsuit against the then-WWF. Not only has she forgiven the company, but she apparently has no trouble doing a lesbian storyline with Torrie Wilson. So much for religious convictions.

So I'll abstain. As for the over-21 male demographic, I will say that their five bucks would be better spent on a six-pack. The Torrie you'll see on *Smackdown* every Thursday night is probably more alluring than the one you'll find in *Playboy*—skin or no skin.

In typical mode, Hef and company eclipsed Wilson's ample sex appeal with his commitment to "good taste." I'm not calling for some kind of *Hustler*-esque smut-fest, but the highly touted photo spread was way too short and underwhelming. In the end, though, Torrie's beauty still shows through the airbrushing and safe poses.

Despite this major flaw, featuring its most attractive diva in *Playboy* must still be considered a sharp marketing maneuver for Wilson and WWE. And Vince McMahon will be sure to wring every ounce of titillation from Torrie that he can.

Once again, he's using Wilson to tap that elusive lesbian demo by featuring her in yet another envelope-pushing angle. First, Dawn Marie became smitten with Torrie in a short-lived program; now Sable's trying to turn her on.

Souls for sale. Speaking of Sable and moral planes, it's amazing what five years out of the spotlight will do to the sanctimonious. If memory serves, Rena Mero turned her nose up at portraying a lesbian character and in fact used WWE's repeated requests as the fulcrum for a sexual harassment case against the company.

Rena and her husband, Marc, touted their strong religious convictions back then. Now that fame and fortune have proven to be fleeting, it seems the Meros are a bit less pious.

WrestleMania blunder. Good to see that WWE's silly decision not to include Rob Van Dam in WrestleMania XIX hasn't affected his confidence. RVD eschewed backstage politics at WWE Axxess—the annual pre-event meet-and-greet that lasts through much of WrestleMania weekend—and voiced his displeasure at the snub.

When you piss off RVD, you piss off the fans, Van Dam told the *No Holds Barred* radio show in a remark that sounded steeped in reality rather than character. Whether that was Rob Szatkowski or Rob Van Dam speaking doesn't matter; he (they) spoke the truth.

Of course, neither RVD nor the fans should be surprised. WWE hasn't been giving the people all that they want for months now. But when you gobble up the competition, you can decide what the fans want without as much fear of repercussion.

Broken record. I was deeply disappointed by the results of Curt Hennig's toxicology reports. Apparently,

Hennig died of a heart attack brought on by cocaine use.

You'll never catch me sitting around the campfire with Phil Mushnick or Geraldo Rivera, but the number of drug-related deaths in the past few years demands that somebody in professional wrestling look past the messenger and focus on the message.

Whether it's serious testing or altering the conditions that necessitate drug use, the sports entertainment industry must do a better job of preserving its own—if not for the good of its performers, then for the good of its image. Death after drug-related death will eventually catch up with the industry.

David vs. Goliath. Chris Jericho reportedly caught up with Bill Goldberg at the April 7 episode of *Raw*. Seems there's still a little leftover tension between these two that goes back a few years. It all goes back to WCW (to which most problems in pro wrestling can be traced), when Goldberg deemed Jericho "too small" to wrestle against in a long-term feud. This latest altercation ensued after Jericho confronted Goldberg about some of his comments.

I suppose Jericho should be given some sort of credit for stepping up to Goldberg, who holds a significant size and strength advantage. However, he must realize the odds that these guys will face each other in a high-profile match inside a WWE ring are slim—not because of the size difference, but because even with two years off, Goldberg still is the bigger name.

"The King" and I. For somebody who makes a living off the wrestling business, Jerry Lawler sure doesn't pay much attention. Everyone in North America (or at least all those who watched WrestleMania XIX) figured Bill Goldberg would be at *Raw* on March 31, probably to challenge The Rock. After all, WWE ran a video montage at WrestleMania that hyped Goldberg's first match in WWE, scheduled for Backlash. And it's not like he was just going to show up at Backlash hoping to find an opponent willing to wrestle him in an impromptu bout.

Has Jerry Lawler been spending too much time studying Tony Schiavone's work on old *Nitro* tapes? Frank Krewda couldn't help wondering after the appearance of Goldberg at the March 31 *Raw* came as such a shock to "The King."

Well, apparently everyone but Lawler figured this all out. The fans cheered and chanted in anticipation while The Rock stood in the ring at the end of the show and announced there were no challenges left for him in wrestling. Then Goldberg's music began to play, and "Da Man" made his way to the ring. At this point, Lawler asked, "What's Bill Goldberg doing here?"

I don't know whether Lawler (whom, by the way, I enjoy, despite his tired sophomoric one-liners) comes up with his own material, but doesn't anyone at WWE have any idea how stupid that sounded?

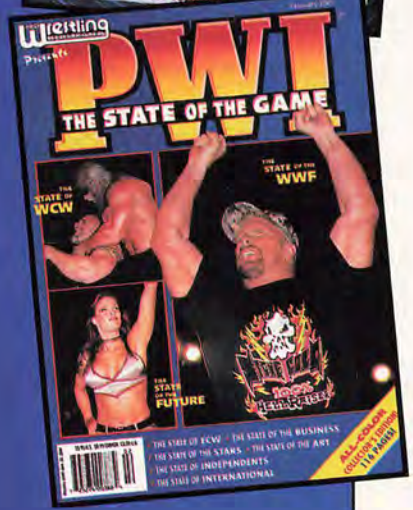
Lawler's remarks reminded me of an episode of *WCW Monday Nitro* during which a perplexed Tony Schiavone demanded of Mike Tenay: "That's Hulk Hogan! What's he doing here?"

Of course, Hogan was only one of the company's biggest stars at the time.

While Lawler is at the mercy of creative pundits who feel compelled to cater to the Internet fans who know of a signing months before it happens, Goldberg's was only the most hyped in the past three years.

Maybe if WWE and its superstars got into the habit of sitting on such information, major signings and appearances would have a little more impact. □

LEX LUGER IS LOSING HIS COOL!
FULL-COLOR FOLDOUT: BRIAN PILLMAN
PRO Wrestling ILLUSTRATED
THE WAR IS OVER! HULK HOGAN LIBERATES THE WWF BELT FROM SGT. SLAUGHTER!
Atlantic City Shocker! THE HORSEMEN CRAP OUT ON SID VICIOUS!
The PWI Dream Tournament! YOU DECIDE WHO WINS!


Wrestling
PWI
THE STATE OF THE GAME
THE STATE OF WCW
THE STATE OF THE WWF
THE STATE OF FUTURE
THE STATE OF ECW · THE STATE OF THE BUSINESS
THE STATE OF THE STARS · THE STATE OF THE ART
THE STATE OF INDEPENDENTS
THE STATE OF INTERNATIONAL
ALL-COLOR COLLECTOR'S EDITION
114 PAGES!

only $5 each

BACK ISSUES OF PRO Wrestling® ILLUSTRATED

ARE GOING FAST!

PLACE YOUR ORDER TODAY!

January 1990: Warrior's Next Victim: Hulk Hogan? Centerfold: Sid Vicious. Plus: Kerry Von Erich, Jim Ross, Midnight Express.

May 1990: Hulk Hogan: Primed And Ready For WrestleMania VI. Centerfold: Great Muta. Plus: Piper-Rude, Eric Embry, Rock 'n' Rolls, Sid Vicious, pain.

July 1990: The Maturing Of Lex Luger: The "Total Package" Becomes The People's Choice. Centerfold: Rick Martel. Plus: Skyscrapers, Bobby Heenan, Mr. Saito, referees.

September 1990: The Hulkster's Wrath: 7,000 Miles To Violent Redemption. Centerfold: The Steiners. Plus: Jeff Jarrett, Sting, Destruction Crew, Four Horsemen, Curt Hennig.

October 1990: Sting's Painful Lesson: You'll Have No Friends At The Top. Centerfold: Brutus Beefcake. Plus: Orndorff-Blanchard, Tugboat, Teddy Long, Ultimate Warrior, Road Warriors.

February 1991: WrestleMania VII Contest. Centerfold: 1991 calendar. Plus: Sid Vicious, DiBiase-Rhodes, Scott Steiner, Power & Glory, Terry Funk.

April 1991: Sgt. Slaughter Guilty Of Treason! Centerfold: Tom Zenk. Plus: Sting, Magnum T.A., Jesse Ventura, Lawler-Gilbert, Hogan & Warrior.

June 1991: Hulk Hogan: America's Hero. Centerfold: Hacksaw Duggan. Plus: Cactus Jack, Ric Flair, Nasty Boys, Steiners, Simmons-Reed.

July 1991: The War Is Over! Hulk Hogan Liberates The WWF Belt From Sgt. Slaughter! Centerfold: Brian Pillman. Plus: Horsemen, Lex Luger, Eric Embry, Demolition.

August 1991 (Special Issue): Supercards '91. Centerfold: Hulk Hogan. Plus: WrestleMania VII, WCW-New Japan, Ultimate Warrior, Owen Hart, Koloff-Luger.

October 1991: Sid Justice: The Second Coming Of Hulk Hogan. Centerfold: Lex Luger. Plus: Hogan-Slaughter, Terrence Taylor, Barry Windham, Williams-Bigelow.

November 1991: Your Wedding Gift For Savage & Elizabeth: Help Lift The "Macho Man's" Suspension! Centerfold: Bobby Eaton. Plus: Tito Santana, Bushwhackers, Jushin Liger, Brian Pillman.

February 1992: Has Hulk Hogan Had Enough? Centerfold: 1992 calendar. Plus: Sting, Justice-Roberts, hot prospects, Eddie Gilbert.

May 1992: Revitalized In Tokyo: Hulk Hogan Is Super-Psyched For WrestleMania VII! Centerfold: Rick Rude. Plus: Sting & Muta-Steiners, Jarrett & Fuller, Lightning Kid, Randy Savage, intimidation.

June 1992: Exclusive *PWI* Interview: Roddy Piper Speaks Out! Centerfold: Dustin Rhodes. Plus: Dangerously-Sting, Abdullah-Cactus, Sid Justice, Randy Savage.

July 1992: The Best Of The Best—The Masters Of Their Craft. Centerfold: Randy Savage. Plus: Liger-Pillman, Jim Neidhart, U.S.-Japan, Ric Flair.

September 1992: Savage vs. Sting: Why It Isn't That Unlikely. Centerfold: Nikita Koloff. Plus: Steiners, Barry Windham, Sid Justice, Hodge & Weston, Shawn Michaels.

October 1992: The Hatred Still Runs Deep: Ultimate Warrior vs. Randy Savage—They'll Settle Up At SummerSlam! Centerfold: Cactus Jack. Plus: Steve Williams, Tom Zenk, WWF title controversy, fire match, Eric Embry.

February 1993: No One Can Cut Down Razor Ramon. Centerfold: Curt Hennig. Plus: Jake Roberts, Pillman-Dustin, Ric Flair-Road Warriors, Rick Rude, Snuka-Muraco.

May 1993: WrestleMania Without Hulk Hogan? Centerfold: The Undertaker. Plus: Ron Simmons, Cactus Jack, Madusa-Sherri, WCW-New Japan, Ultimate Warrior.

April 1996: WCW World Title Turmoil. Centerfold: The Kid. Plus: Hulk Hogan, Ahmed Johnson, Bob Armstrong, Michaels-Bret, Public Enemy.

May 1996: Un-Natural! The WWF Has Finally Gone Too Far! Centerfold: Public Enemy. Plus: Jeff Jarrett, Dreamer-Raven, Dan Severn, Ric Flair, Giant.

October 1996: Peaking Too Soon: Will The Giant Be Ruined By His Own Success? Centerfold: Goldust. Plus: Big Van Vader, Ric Flair, Bulldog, Lex Luger.

February 1997: Mr. Perfect: "Shawn Michaels Stole My Life." Centerfold: "Psycho" Sid. Plus: Kroffat & Furnas, Vince McMahon, Randy Savage, New Razor & New Diesel.

July 1997: Steve Austin: Stone-Cold And Uncensored! Centerfold: "Diamond" Dallas Page. Plus: Rocky Maivia, The Road Warriors, The Eliminators, Nick Patrick.

December 1997: Ken Shamrock's Deadly Climb To The Top. Centerfold: Randy Savage. Plus: Eric Bischoff, Eddy Guerrero, Perry Saturn, WWF light heavyweights.

February 1998: Sting vs. Hogan—The Match Of The Century! Centerfold: Hogan vs. Sting fight poster. Plus: 16-page Starrcade preview, Perry Saturn, Dude Love.

May 1998: Starrcade Scandal! We Hate To Say It ... But Give The Belt Back To Hogan. Centerfold: Ric Flair. Plus: Mero & Sable, Taz, Taka Michinoku.

June 1998 (Special Issue): The 1998 PWI Poll. Centerfold: Steve Austin. Plus: Sabu, Lex Luger, Sting, Rocky Maivia, Bill Goldberg.

July 1998: WWF vs. WCW: Which Is Better? Centerfold: Rocky Maivia. Plus: Benoit, Bill Goldberg, Ahmed Johnson.

October 1998: Bret Screws Bret, Part II. Centerfold: Hunter Hearst Helmsley. Plus: Jim Ross, Marcus Bagwell, WWF controversy, FBI.

November 1998: Vince Mc(Mad)Man! He Crossed The Bottom Line ... Now He'll Pay! Centerfold: Kevin Nash. Plus: Sting, Bret Hart, Taz-Douglas, New Age Outlaws.

December 1998: Gold Rush! Get Ready For The Most Awesome WCW Title Reign Ever! Centerfold: Undertaker. Plus: The Giant, Vader, Guerreros, Ken Shamrock.

Holiday 1998: *PWI* 500. Eighth Annual Special.

March 1999: 1998—The Year In Wrestling. 1998 In Review, Achievement '98 awards, Unofficial/Official awards, Predictions for 1999.

April 1999: The Crock! The Title Change That Screwed The World! Centerfold: Chris Jericho. Plus: Bill Goldberg, Tommy Dreamer, Booker T, more Unofficial/Officials.

May 1999: Who Holds The Key To WrestleMania XV? Centerfold: Konnan. Plus: Mark Henry, Sting-Nash, Bill Alfonso, Brian Hildebrand.

June 1999: The 1999 *PWI* Poll. Plus: Mankind, Flair & Turner, VMac, Steiners, New Japan-UFO.

July 1999: Warning! This Team Will Self-Destruct In 15 Seconds! Centerfold: X-Pac. Plus: New Jack-Dudleys, Jesse James, Venis & Godfather, Sting-Bischoff-Flair.

August 1999: Supercards '99: WWF WrestleMania, WCW Uncensored, ECW Living Dangerously. Plus: Super 8, Bam Bam Bigelow, Jerry Lawler, tag team wrestling.

September 1999: Why Stone-Cold Might Get Out While He's Still On Top! Centerfold: Sting. Plus: Kid-man & Misterio, The Rock, Bret Hart, Taz-Sabu.

October 1999: Why The World Must Fear Scott Steiner, By Buff Bagwell. Centerfold: Mankind. Plus: Kane & X-Pac, The Godfather, Perry Saturn, 20th anniversary readers' poll.

November 1999: The Women Of The WWF: There's More To Their Power Than Their Looks. Centerfold: Owen Hart. Plus: Rey Misterio Jr., Roddy Piper, Steiners, Steve Austin.

December 1999: Steve Austin: "CEO This! I'm The Damn Champ!" Centerfold: Rey Misterio Jr. Plus: Randy Savage, Jimmy Hart, WCW youth, Billy Gunn.

Holiday 1999: *PWI* 500. Ninth Annual Special.

January 2000: The Millennium Man Mouths Off! An Unforgettable Hour With Chris Jericho! Centerfold: Taz. Plus: Chris Benoit, Sid-Goldberg, Triple-H.

February 2000: The Master Manipulator! How Stone-Cold Controls The WWF. Centerfold: Kane. Plus: Paul Heyman, Hogan-Bret-Sting-Luger.

March 2000: 1999—The Year In Wrestling. 1999 In Review, Achievement '99 awards, Unofficial/Official awards, Predictions for 2000.

April 2000: Stone-Cold vs. The Rock: Let's Settle It At WrestleMania! Centerfold: Chris Benoit. Plus: Dallas Page, Goldberg-Vicious, more Unofficial awards.

May 2000: The Y2K *PWI* Poll. Plus: Mitsuharu Misawa, Triple-H, Bret Hart, Hollys, Chyna & Aysa, ECW returnees.

June 2000: Just Wondering, Steph ... Is Triple-H Worth Your Billion-Dollar Inheritance? Centerfold: The Rock. Plus: Heyman-Van Dam, Vader, NWO.

July 2000: Call It A Wrap, Jack! You've Done Your Share ... Go Home! Centerfold: Sid Vicious. Plus: Dusty Rhodes, Disco Inferno, DDP, Dudleys-Hardys.

August 2000: Supercards 2000: WWF WrestleMania, WCW Uncensored, ECW Living Dangerously. Plus: Rob Van Dam, greatest supercards, Super 8.

September 2000: Wrestle McMania! Why The Peace Can't Last. Centerfold: Jeff Jarrett. Plus: Eric Bischoff, Dudleys, Raven.

October 2000: Scott Steiner: The Superstar The WWF Let Slip Away. Centerfold: Rikishi. Plus: Shawn Michaels, Austin-Rock, Rhino-RVD.

November 2000: The Rock vs. Triple-H. Our Special 50-Category Analysis. Pinups: Extreme wrestling. Plus: Nash-Steiner-Hall, Hardcore Holly, wrestling too extreme?

December 2000: Head Hog! Does Undertaker Have Enough Gas In His Tank To Rumble To The Top? Centerfold: Dallas Page. Plus: Kurt Angle, Rikishi, Vampiro-Sting, Japan.

[FULL-COLOR BEGINNING WITH HOLIDAY 2000]

Holiday 2000 (116 Pages): *PWI* 500. Includes: The editors' views, a look back at 1991's top 25, Achievement 2000 ballot.

January 2001: Who Does He Really Hate? Someone Will Pay For Austin's Pain! Plus: Steven Richards, Justin Credible, Gordon Solie, Jeff Jarrett, Arn-Sid.

February 2001 (116 Pages): The State Of The Game. Includes: The states of the WWF, WCW, ECW, independents, international, the business, the art

March 2001: Hulk Hogan: WWF Fans Want Him Back! Plus: Mike Awesome, Rikishi, Jerry Lynn, Elix Skipper, Triple-H.

April 2001 (116 Pages): 2000—The Year In Wrestling. Plus: 2000 In Review, Achievement '00 awards, Unofficial/Official awards, Predictions for 2001.

May 2001: The WrestleMania Curse! Will The Great One Ever Win The Big One? Plus: Vince McMahon, William Regal, Page & Nash, Ivory, Lance Storm, ECW.

June 2001 (116 Pages): The 2001 *PWI* Poll. Plus: Ric Flair, Chyna, Steve Austin.

July 2001: Women's Work! It Ain't What It Used To Be! Plus: Dudleys, Chavo Guerrero Jr., Justin Credible, Francine, Scott Steiner.

August 2001 (116 Pages): Supercards 2001: WrestleMania X-Seven, WCW Night of Champions, Super 8. Plus: Big Show, Kane, Jeff Jarrett, Tommy Dreamer.

September 2001: WWF-WCW: The 10 Questions That Must Be Answered. Plus: Triple-H, Stacy Keibler, Paul Heyman, Matt Hardy.

October 2001 (116 Pages): Mid-Year Report. Top 50 stories, grades, half-year awards, predictions. Plus: Perry Saturn, Dallas Page, Terri.

November 2001: A Crying Shane: He Paid The Price To Purchase WCW ... Is He Willing To Pay The Price To Keep It? Plus: DDP-Kimberly, Edge, Molly-Spike, Tajiri, Rob Van Dam, Mick Foley, Florida indies.

December 2001 (116 Pages): *PWI* 500—Angle Climbs To The Top. Includes: The editors' views, Achievement 2001 ballot.

January 2002: There's Something About Lita—What Makes Her The WWF's "It" Girl. Plus: Jericho-Stephanie, Mark Henry, X-Pac, Triple-H, Undertaker.

February 2002 (116 Pages): The State Of The Game. Includes: The states of the WWF, independents, international, the business, the art. Plus: Golderg.

March 2002: No More Joking, No More Choking: Y2J Takes A Serious Stab At Superstardom! Plus: Test, The Rock, Eric Bischoff, Bradshaw, Foley vs. Regal.

April 2002 (116 Pages): 2001—The Year In Wrestling. 2001 In Review, Achievement 2001 awards, Unofficial/Official awards, Predictions for 2002.

May 2002: The Mania To End All Manias! What Will Wrestling Look Like By WrestleMania X-9? Plus: Trish Stratus, RVD, Russ Haas, Big Bossman, WWF comedy.

June 2002 (116 Pages): The 2002 *PWI* Poll. Plus: Hulk Hogan, Ric Flair, Steve Austin.

July 2002: Steph Infection! How Can Triple-H Keep His Mind On His Game? Plus: Goldust-Terri, NWO, Ron Waterman, Spike & Tazz, Jazz.

August 2002 (116 Pages): Supercards 2002: WrestleManiaX8, WWA Revolution, Super 8. Plus: X-Pac, Steve Corino, Ric Flair.

September 2002: No Rock ... No Problem: The WWF Can Thrive Without The Great One. Plus: WWF draft, Billy Kidman, Sean O'Haire, Stanley Weston.

October 2002 (116 Pages): Mid-Year Report. Top 50 stories, grades, half-year awards, predictions. Plus: Lou Thesz, Francine, Edge.

November 2002: Stone-Cold Meltdown! Plus: Heyman & Lesnar, Lance Storm, NWA: TNA, DDP, A.J. Styles, Island Boys.

December 2002 (116 Pages): *PWI* 500—RVD Is No. 1. Includes: The editors' views, Achievement 2002 ballot.

January 2003: Brock Aftershock: How Lesnar Changed The Future Of WWE. Plus: Chris Benoit, Low-Ki, Jericho-Flair, Rey Misterio Jr., SummerSlam at 15.

February 2003 (116 Pages): The State Of The Game. Includes: The states of Raw, Smackdown, independents, international, the business, the art.

March 2003: Rocky Horror! He Won't Forget What You Did Last Summer. Plus: Matt Hardy, Eddie Guerrero, Bass-WWE, Victoria, WWE's next wave.

April 2003 (116 Pages): 2002—The Year In Wrestling. 2002 In Review, Achievement 2002 awards, Unofficial/Official awards, Predictions for 2003.

May 2003 (116 Pages): The WrestleMania 100. Plus: Angle-Lesnar, Christopher Nowinski, Vince Russo, Batista & Flair.

June 2003 (116 Pages): The 2002 *PWI* Poll. Plus: Rey Misterio Jr.

PRO WRESTLING ILLUSTRATED

Send to:
London Publishing Co.
P.O. Box 910
Fort Washington, PA 19034

Please indicate method of payment:

☐ Check or money order (enclosed and payable to London Publishing Co.)
☐ VISA
☐ MasterCard
Card number: _____
Expiration date: ____/____
MO/YR

Signature_____

NAME_____

ADDRESS_____**APT**____

CITY_____**STATE**____**ZIP**_____

For all orders outside the U.S., you must add $1.50 for every back issue to be sent via surface mail, and $3.00 for every back issue to be sent airmail. Int'l money order in U.S. funds only. Please allow 6-8 weeks for delivery.

Please send me the back issues I have checked off. I have enclosed $5 for each issue as payment in full or provided my credit card number to charge my purchase ($20 minimum).

☐ JAN 90	☐ OCT 96	☐ JAN 00	☐ OCT 01
☐ MAY 90	☐ FEB 97	☐ FEB 00	☐ NOV 01
☐ JUL 90	☐ DEC 97	☐ MAR 00	☐ DEC 01
☐ SEP 90	☐ FEB 98	☐ APR 00	☐ JAN 02
☐ OCT 90	☐ MAY 98	☐ MAY 00	☐ FEB 02
☐ FEB 91	☐ JUN 98	☐ JUN 00	☐ MAR 02
☐ APR 91	☐ JUL 98	☐ JUL 00	☐ APR 02
☐ JUN 91	☐ OCT 98	☐ AUG 00	☐ MAY 02
☐ JUL 91	☐ NOV 98	☐ SEP 00	☐ JUN 02
☐ AUG 91	☐ DEC 98	☐ OCT 00	☐ JUL 02
☐ OCT 91	☐ HOL 98	☐ NOV 00	☐ AUG 02
☐ NOV 91	☐ MAR 99	☐ DEC 00	☐ SEP 02
☐ FEB 92	☐ APR 99	☐ HOL 00	☐ OCT 02
☐ MAY 92	☐ MAY 99	☐ JAN 01	☐ NOV 02
☐ JUN 92	☐ JUN 99	☐ FEB 01	☐ DEC 02
☐ JUL 92	☐ JUL 99	☐ MAR 01	☐ JAN 03
☐ SEP 92	☐ AUG 99	☐ APR 01	☐ FEB 03
☐ OCT 92	☐ SEP 99	☐ MAY 01	☐ MAR 03
☐ FEB 93	☐ OCT 99	☐ JUN 01	☐ APR 03
☐ MAY 93	☐ NOV 99	☐ JUL 01	☐ MAY 03
☐ APR 96	☐ DEC 99	☐ AUG 01	☐ JUN 03
☐ MAY 96	☐ HOL 99	☐ SEP 01	

In case of sellout, indicate two substitute choices:_____ _____

6113/04-03

press conference...

Ace Steel must be one of the young Ring of Honor wrestlers who Raven claims he is teaching about toughness and being the best they can be. He has certainly been making his rounds in the independents since WWE released him.

RAVEN

THE BLOODTHIRSTY RAVEN that terrorized ECW in the mid-1990s has re-emerged in NWA-TNA.

Raven's stint in WWE ended with barely a whimper. Despite establishing himself as a force in the hardcore ranks, Raven was unable to break out of the mid-card ranks and for the most part was relegated to duty on ***Sunday Night Heat*** *(as both a commentator and a wrestler). To the disappointment of many who felt he had the talent but was never given a legitimate chance at stardom, he was released amid little fanfare in early-2003.*

It looked as if Raven's in-ring career was coming to an end. Years of hardcore brawling had to have taken their toll, and Raven privately expressed interest in getting involved in the creative aspect of the business.

Enter Vince Russo. Russo introduced Raven as a new associate to his Sports Entertainment Xtreme (SEX) faction on January 22, and Raven immediately set his sights on the NWA heavyweight title, which was held by former Russo running buddy Jeff Jarrett. In fact, he did more than set his sights on the belt. He attacked Jarrett and stole the gold on the night he made his TNA debut.

The change of scenery has done wonders for Raven. He has humbled former ECW rival The Sandman in a series of bloody matches and has done well against former X division champion and emerging heavyweight contender A.J. Styles. Whether a match is contested under standard or hardcore rules, he doesn't seem overmatched against anyone. Raven is in prime position to take Jarrett's title—provided someone like Styles or D-Lo Brown, one of Raven's most recent WWE rivals, doesn't take it first.

And that's not all. Raven has made his presence felt in the Philadelphia-based Ring of Honor promotion and in numerous other companies around the country. Rather than scale back his schedule, Raven is wrestling some of the most intense matches of his career, and he is determined to become the biggest star on the independent circuit. And it looks like he has a chance to succeed.

Senior Writers Will Welsh, Dan Murphy, and Harry Burkett met with Raven to discuss his latest exploits and to try to determine exactly what motivates wrestling's most enigmatic personality.

Every issue, reporters from PRO WRESTLING ILLUSTRATED will participate in an incisive press conference with a top wrestling star. The questions will be demanding. And the answers will reveal the innermost thoughts of the giants of the sport.

DAN MURPHY: Thanks for taking a few moments to meet with us, Raven. Since the moment you first set foot in NWA-TNA, you've made it clear that you're after Jeff Jarrett's title belt. Throughout the years, you've also made it clear that you will do anything to earn respect—from the fans, from your peers, and from yourself. My first question is will winning the NWA title bring you that respect you crave and that you obviously didn't get in WWE?

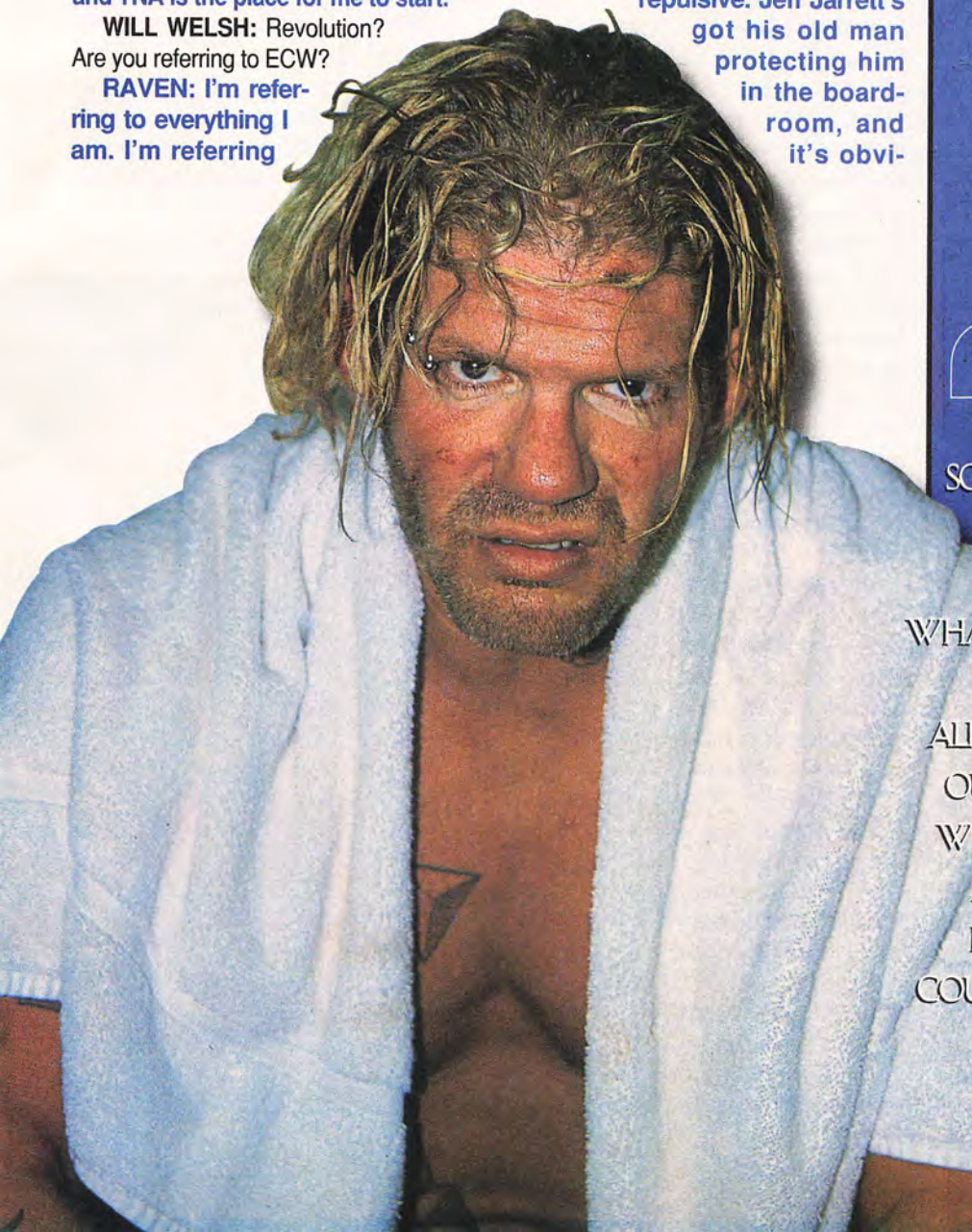
RAVEN: I don't "crave" anything these hillbilly fans have to give, Murphy. I want the NWA title because I deserve it more than anyone in this world deserves it. And because I want to change this place, to turn everything upside-down. I want to bring the revolution to mainstream America, and TNA is the place for me to start.

WILL WELSH: Revolution? Are you referring to ECW?

RAVEN: I'm referring to everything I am. I'm referring to ECW and I'm referring to Raven's rules, and I'm referring to hardcore. I'm referring to survival of the fittest. It's about time TNA got hardcore.

WELSH: Raven, you've already had some truly hardcore battles in TNA. A couple of weeks ago, you and A.J. Styles wrestled one of the most intense matches I've seen in a while, with the winner receiving a title shot against Jarrett. You fought him to a double-pin in your first match, and you showed him a thing or two in a ladder match later. And with that, you earned your title shot.

RAVEN: A title shot, incidentally, that I still haven't received as I sit here engaging in this mindless chatter with you people. You tell me why that is. Every federation plays its favorites, but this place is repulsive. Jeff Jarrett's got his old man protecting him in the boardroom, and it's obvi-



"JEFF JARRETT WILL FEEL RAVEN'S PAIN JUST LIKE SO MANY OTHERS IN TNA HAVE ... JEFF JARRETT DOESN'T UNDERSTAND WHAT HE'S GOTTEN HIMSELF INTO. I'M IN HIS HEAD ALREADY. HE'S TRYING TO OUTTHINK ME, BUT THAT WILL NEVER HAPPEN. I'M A MUCH MORE COMPLEX HUMAN BEING THAN HE COULD EVER UNDERSTAND."

Seven years after his ECW feud with The Sandman reached its peak, they were battling again in NWA-TNA. But Raven's primary mission isn't to rekindle old blood feuds. He's all about capturing the NWA heavyweight title in 2003.

ous to me that some TNA executive wants to see Styles get that belt before me.

HARRY BURKETT: You think Styles is getting preferential treatment? You know, considering Vince Russo personally brought you into TNA, don't you think it's more than a little hypocritical of you to claim Jarrett and Styles are getting preferential treatment?

RAVEN: A.J. Styles is so young and naïve. He thinks he can come into my world and defeat me in my realm. You saw what happened in our ladder match. A.J. Styles still has so much to learn. You look at what I've done in this business. I carried ECW on my back for four years. How many pints of blood did I shed there? I've won titles in both WCW and WWE during the height of the ratings war. I've proven myself. I didn't need Russo to open any doors for me. I open my own doors.

BURKETT: But it didn't hurt, right?

MURPHY: Well, I think you've helped make TNA a more exciting place over the past few months, and it's nice to see you've regained the fire in your belly that made you such a strong champion in ECW. But why are you wrestling dates for Ring of Honor? Aren't you worried you might be spreading yourself too thin, particularly as you chase the NWA heavyweight title and Jeff Jarrett?

RAVEN: That's not the way I look at it. I look at it as making up for lost time. I've been working for promoters for too long. Now I'm working for myself. I'm finally doing what's best for Raven and not what's best for a McMahon or a Bischoff or anyone else. In Ring of Honor, I get an opportunity to face some of the best kids in the business. They'll be wiser for having survived matches with Raven. I push myself and I stay sharp. And that's going to help me in TNA.

WELSH: You've always been a pretty astute judge of talent. Who would you consider to be the most promising prospects you've seen in Ring of Honor?

RAVEN: You know something—I couldn't tell you. See, this whole Ring of Honor code of conduct thing is ridiculous. Chain wrestling and handshakes are fine, but I wrestle to win, not to make friends. These kids are too concerned about trying to impress people with their Lucha Libre moves and holds. If I've got someone outside the ring, I'm not going to try to knock them down with a crazy suicide dive. I'm going to smash their vertebrae or their skull with a chair. I'm going to make them regret fighting me and think twice about doing it again in the future. Until these kids develop that sort of killer instinct, they're not going to be all they can be. Some of them should thank me for teaching them some lessons about hardcore and about life.

BURKETT: Those are some pretty harsh words. I don't think you're going to make too many friends with those kinds of comments.

RAVEN: Did Raven hurt their feelings? Sniff, sniff. Too damn bad. This is a man's business. When they've accomplished a fraction of what I have in this business, then they can try to refute me.

MURPHY: Back to TNA if we could.

D-Lo Brown recently arrived and managed to leapfrog you for a shot at Jarrett's title. What are your thoughts on that? You guys feuded for a long time on *Sunday Night Heat* last year.

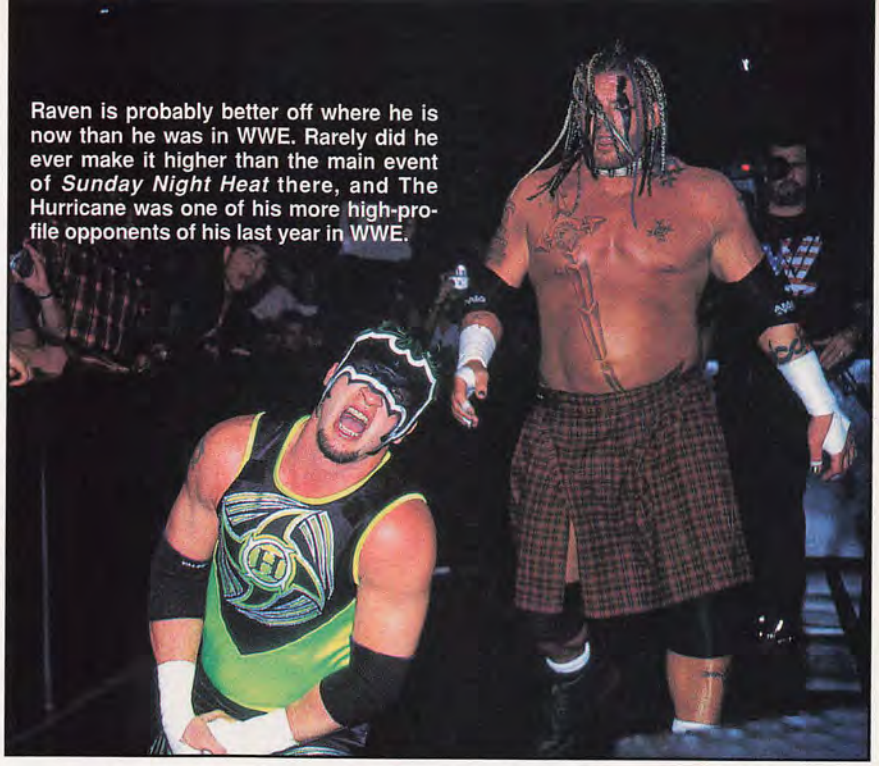
RAVEN: Just what I said before. Jarrett is protected from up high. But I will have my title shot, and you can be sure I'm going to make the most of it. Jeff Jarrett will feel Raven's pain just like so many others in TNA have already felt Raven's pain. Jeff Jarrett doesn't understand what he's gotten himself into. I'm in his head already. He's trying to outthink me, but that will never happen. I'm a much more complex human being than he could ever understand.

MURPHY: And what do you think about D-Lo Brown?

RAVEN: I don't think about D-Lo Brown. Our issues have been resolved for now. I think about the NWA title. I think about it day and night. Nothing else matters to me.

WELSH: What does the NWA title mean to you? Jarrett and Dusty Rhodes have said that belt represents tradition. Does it represent tradition or individual glory to you?

RAVEN: The NWA title represents independence. It means I can be my own man and be recognized as one of the greatest wrestlers of all-time.



Raven is probably better off where he is now than he was in WWE. Rarely did he ever make it higher than the main event of *Sunday Night Heat* there, and The Hurricane was one of his more high-profile opponents of his last year in WWE.

BURKETT: Years ago, Shane Douglas won a version of the NWA title and tossed it aside in favor of the ECW title. What are your feelings on that incident today? Would you have done something like that?

RAVEN: If I was in Shane's shoes back then, I might have. He made a stand for what he believed in. He did something no one could have predicted he would do and didn't think about or care about the consequences. At that time, the NWA title didn't stand for much of anything. Now that it's defended on a national stage again, it means much more, as far as I'm concerned.

WELSH: One final question, Raven. Vince Russo claims he has left TNA to spend more time with his family. In Russo's absence, it looks like you've had some real difficulties with some of the other SEX members. Are you or are you not a member of the group right now?

RAVEN: I am my own man. For the first time in years, I can say I make all of my own decisions, and I have decided to win the NWA title. If associating with that group brings me closer to achieving my goal, then so be it. If destroying that group brings me closer to the NWA title, then that's what I have to do and it's what will be done. It's as simple as that. □

You just never know where Raven will pop up these days. He overwhelmed Jeff Rocker on a recent Maine Event Wrestling show (above) and attacked Brian Lawler that same night (left), perhaps planting the seeds for a TNA feud.

Photos by Joe Zanolle

WrestleMania XIX

The *real* winners & losers!

By Will Welsh

THE SHOW ITSELF has long since ended. The hype machine has been turned off. Heck, every one of you probably ordered WrestleMania XIX on pay-per-view, attended live, or at least followed the WrestleMania fallout on *Raw* and *Smackdown* in the days that followed the biggest show of the year. You know who won the Raw title match, the Smackdown title match, the triple threat match for the Smackdown tag team title, and even the match that was 20 years in the making. You know the cold results every match.

But do you know who *really* won and who *really* lost the nine PPV bouts held on March 30 at Safeco Field in Seattle, Washington? That's the big question. There's so much more to a match—especially a WrestleMania match—than simply who pinned whom and which wrestlers walked out of the arena with gold strapped around their waists.

Every major card—and certainly a WrestleMania card—resolves some old feuds and provides the impetus for feuds between others. That's why we have dug beneath the surface of this supercard of supercards to find out exactly who won and who lost at WrestleMania XIX in the important ways. It's a one-of-a-kind analysis that can only be found on the pages of *PWI*.

As always, if you want the real story, you have to look very, *very* closely to find it.

WRESTLEMANIA XIX

The *real* winners & losers!

The Match: Matt Hardy vs. Rey Misterio Jr. for the WWE cruiserweight title

The Action: Before the action began, Hardy's Mattitude entrance provided every little Mattitude follower in attendance with the following information: "This is Matt's fourth WrestleMania" and "Matt often wonders how they ever did WrestleMania without him."

One thing's for sure: You can't say the guy isn't self-assured.

The match got underway when Hardy's lead Mattitude Follower, Shannon Moore, tried to distract Misterio, but Misterio reacted well, tossing Hardy to the floor and then diving on top of both Hardy and Moore as they tried to recover on the outside. When the match returned to the ring, Misterio gained the upper hand with a flying headscissors, but interference by Moore turned the match in Hardy's favor.

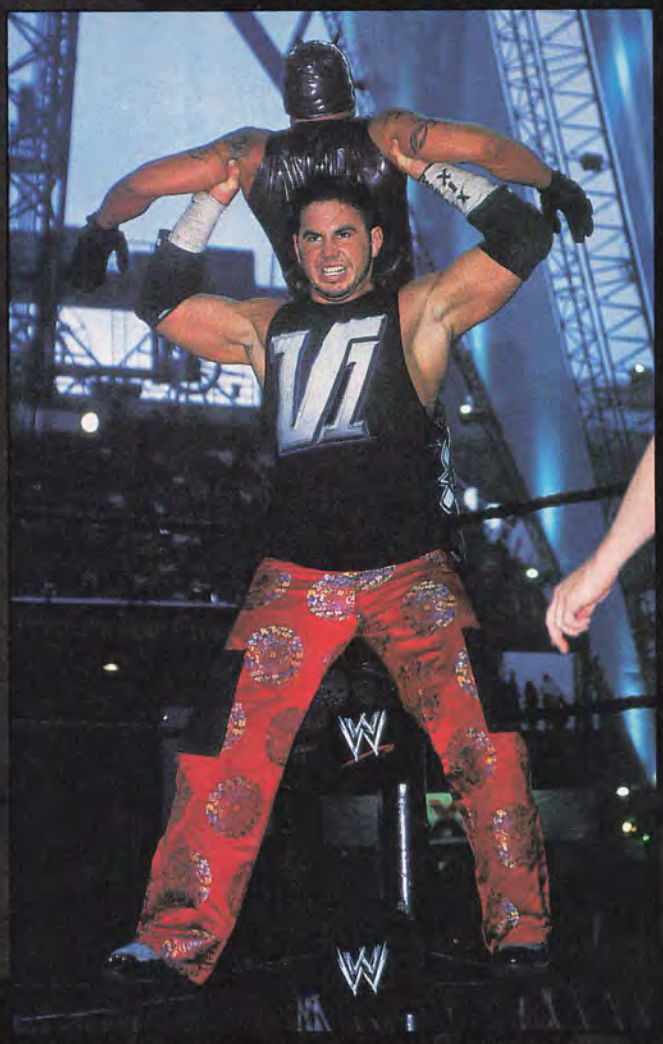
Once in control, Hardy used every ounce of his cruiserweight frame *(cough, cough)* to punish Misterio—including a blatant choke on the ring ropes. Of course, Moore was there to continue the choke when the referee forced Matt to back away. At this point, it might have as well have been a handicap match, but Misterio continued to fight, somehow scoring a two-count after nailing Hardy with a swinging DDT.

Things really started to heat up around the three-minute mark, when Hardy planted Misterio with the twist of fate. Misterio kicked out of the subsequent pinfall attempt and retaliated with a 619. But when he tried to follow up the 619 with the West Coast pop, Matt ducked. A couple of seconds later, using the ropes for leverage, Matt finished off his title defense.

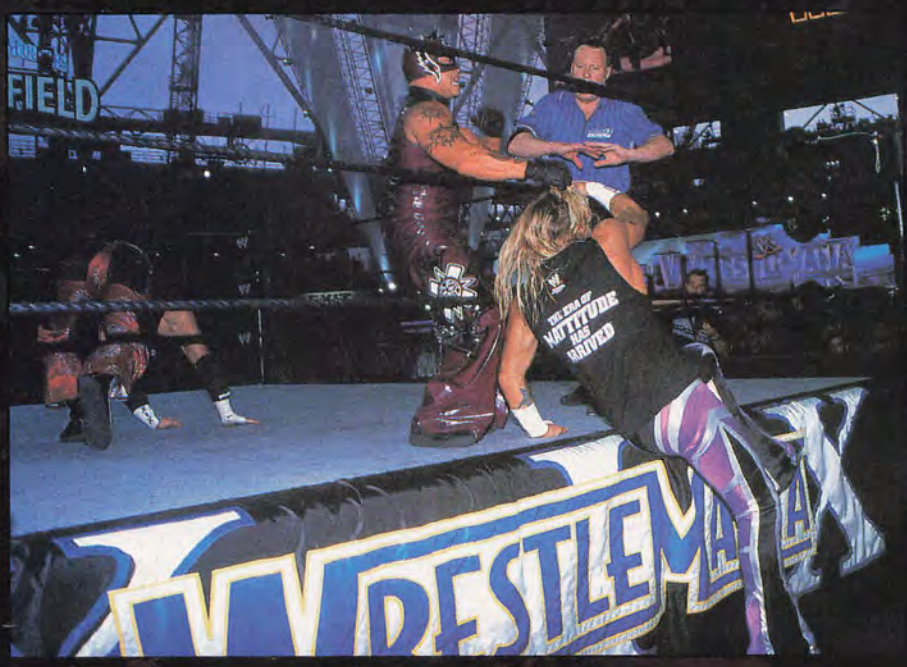
The Winner: Hardy pinned Misterio at 4:23 to retain the cruiserweight title.

The Real Winner: Misterio, who not only had to wrestle Hardy during the match, but also had to deal with Moore's pesky interference. If not for Moore's presence at ringside, we're certain that Misterio would have walked away with championship gold.

The Real Loser: Hardy. The creator of Mattitude stands 6'1" and weights 220 pounds—or so he says (he's probably heavier). Misterio, on the other hand, stands 5'3" and weighs 163 pounds. Given that size and weight differential, Hardy should have had no problem defending the cruiserweight championship, yet if it wasn't for Moore's con-



Matt Hardy executed some nice moves against Rey Misterio Jr. in the all-too-brief WM opener (above), and although Rey tried to keep Shannon Moore from interfering (below), the Hardy-Moore combination was too much for him. Somehow, both Hardy and Moore ended up winners ... and losers?!



stant interference, he would have lost the strap. For ego's sake, perhaps Hardy should consider giving up the cruiserweight championship before someone less talented than Misterio beats him for it.

Another Loser: Moore, who continues to do more for Hardy than he does for himself and looks like a 181-pound chump in the process.

Another Winner: Also Moore, who earned a nice little WrestleMania bonus despite being nothing more than a glorified second.

Yet Another Loser: Jeff Hardy, once the more promising of the two Hardy brothers, had to sit and watch Matt shine in WrestleMania's opening match. No matter if he does or doesn't have a passion for the business at this point, that had to be a humbling experience.

The Match: The Undertaker vs. The Big Show and A-Train in a handicap match

The Action: It's hard to believe that the inclusion of Nathan Jones, 'Taker's scheduled partner, could have made this match much worse, but WWE officials apparently disagreed, which is why The Full-Blooded Italians left Jones lying on *Sunday Night Heat.*

Talk about a "no-confidence" vote. Jeez!

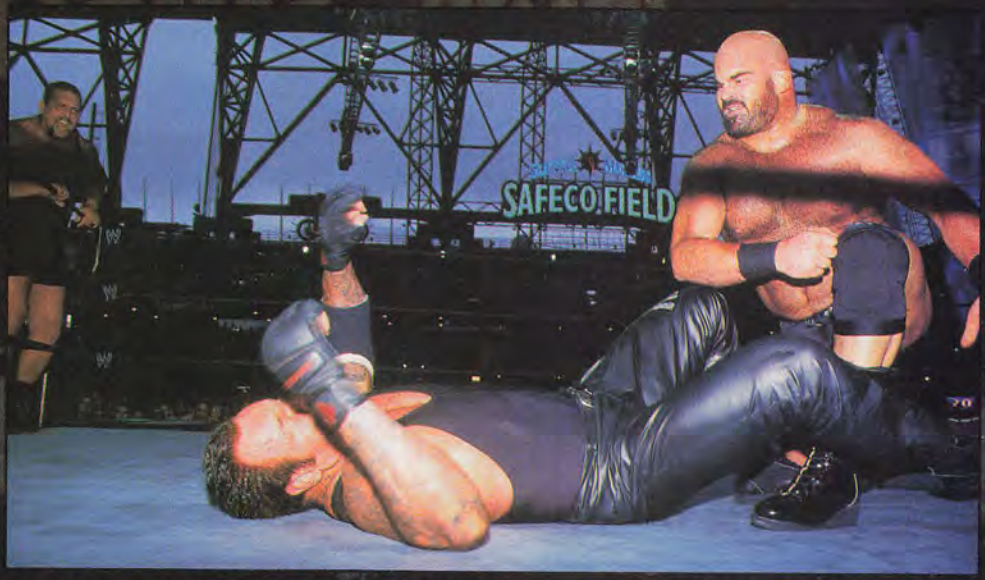
Anyway, 'Taker made his way to ringside accompanied by the live music of Limp Bizkit, the group that was performing "Rollin'," UT's old entrance theme. The match started off on a fast note when 'Taker quickly got a hold of A-Train and scored with a choke-slam, but it didn't take long for Show and A-Train to capitalize on their two-on-one advantage. Show took 'Taker down to ringside, ramming him into the ringpost before tossing him back in the ring and tagging in A-Train, who continued the assault.

'Taker, one of the most resilient wrestlers on either WWE roster, managed to get some offense in on Show by reversing a choke-slam attempt into an armbar, but it didn't last, as A-Train broke it up. Then came a series of abdominal stretches by Show and A-Train, which bored the crowd without accomplishing anything else.

The crowd finally sensed that something was going to happen when Jones emerged from the back and briefly attacked Show on the outside and A-Train in the ring. The attack by Jones was all that 'Taker needed. "The Dead Man" picked up A-Train and finished him off with a tombstone piledriver.

The Winner: The Undertaker pinned A-Train at 9:53.

The Real Winner: The Undertaker. Despite his age (he's 41) and lingering injuries, 'Taker still gives everything he can every time he steps inside the ring. He continues to show other WWE superstars what being a WWE superstar is all about, even as his match quality declines. There's no doubt that he was the hardest-working member of the threesome, and most of the credit for the rare positives in the match should go to him.



There's no way A-Train or his partner, The Big Show, could be labeled winners when they lost a handicap match to The Undertaker. Unless, that is, they had split up immediately afterward!

The Real Loser: Jones, who had been booked for WrestleMania for a couple of weeks, only to see his spot on the card yanked in favor of a handicap match—a decision that does not bode well for his future with the company, unless he starts showing some in-ring progress. Spin kicks and big boots won't get you anywhere—especially on the Smackdown side—where quality wrestling matches have come to the forefront.

Yet More Losers: Show and A-Train. Do we really need to explain this selection? They're one of the more ill-conceived teams in recent memory. WWE officials should let them go their separate ways.

Another Winner: Kane. He might have a lower profile than his "half-brother," The Undertaker, but in Rob Van Dam, he has the much better tag team partner.

More Gosh-Darn Losers: Matt Hardy, Rey Misterio Jr., and Shannon Moore, who were only given half as much time as 'Taker, Show, and Albert.

And, Yes, Another Stinkin' Loser: The

WRESTLEMANIA XIX

The *real* winners & losers!

WWE official who decided to give 'Taker, Show, and Albert five more minutes than the cruiserweight title match. What was he thinking?

The Match: Victoria vs. Jazz vs. Trish Stratus in a triple threat match for the WWE women's title

The Action: The WWE women's division has come a long way in recent years, and these three outstanding wrestlers deserve much of the credit. Jazz started off the match by attacking Stratus and Victoria before the bell, knocking Victoria to the outside and putting Stratus in a version of the camel clutch. Stratus responded with a Steve Austin-esque Thesz press, but she was unable to take advantage of her newfound momentum because Victoria pulled her off the ring apron and to the outside. Once back in the ring, Victoria landed an impressive legdrop on Stratus, but Jazz broke up the pinfall attempt. Victoria and Jazz then started to double-team Stratus; together, they hit a devastating double-shoulderbreaker on the beautiful WWE diva.

Fortunately for Stratus, the alliance didn't last long, but that didn't stop Jazz from planting her to the mat with a wicked powerslam. When Jazz went for the pin, though, Victoria was there to break it up. Shortly thereafter, Stratus got into it with both women at the same time and managed to get several two-counts despite being outmanned.

Stratus came closest to losing the match when Jazz got her alone in the ring and began using submission-style holds to try to secure the win. Jazz first positioned Stratus in a half-Boston crab, and then turned it into a variation of the STF. Sensing that the end might be near, Steven Richards, who accompanied Victoria to ringside, broke the hold while Victoria distracted the referee. However, Richards' interference didn't keep Jazz from punishing Stratus. Only seconds later, Jazz hoisted Trish high into in the air with a double-chicken wing hold. Victoria got back into the mix and dropped Jazz with a kick, but she missed her follow-up moonsault attempt. She wasn't down long, though. Victoria sent Jazz to the outside as Richards entered the ring with a chair, aiming straight for Stratus.

Stratus, however, came to WrestleMania XIX prepared for Richards' involvement. She ducked his attempted chair shot, and the chair hit the ropes and bounced back to hit Richards in the head. She followed that up by laying Richards out with her Stratus-faction bulldog off the ropes, which got the crowd on its feet. Victoria tried to take advantage of Stratus' apparent lack of concentration by attempting the widow's peak on her, but Trish escaped and eventually kicked Victoria in the face to set up the pinfall.

The Winner: Stratus, who regained the WWE women's title when she pinned Victoria at 7:17.

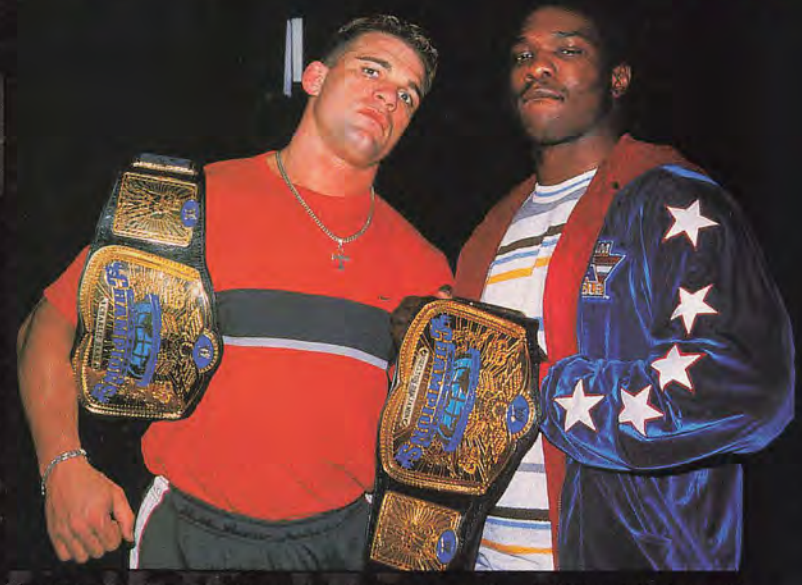
The Real Winner: The once-maligned WWE women's division. For the second year in a row, the women put on one of WrestleMania's most competitive matches—as well as one of the most hard-fought. There's no doubt that WWE's current roster of women have made the division the best that it's ever been.

Jazz couldn't get Trish Stratus to submit to her half-Boston crab (top). And she and Victoria couldn't put away Trish while working as a team (above). It was the lovely Miss Stratus' night to shine, although all three were the real winners in this match.

The Real Losers: The female members of the Smackdown brand. No offense to those lovely ladies, but their basic antics don't even begin to compare what the Raw women's crew accomplishes on a weekly basis. No wonder that brand doesn't have an exclusive women's championship.

Another Winner: Jazz. When Jazz debuted in WWE, she carried a bit of a cringe factor into the ring with her. What does that mean? Well, fans would look at her and cringe almost instantaneously—not something that bodes well for a career. Jazz never let that get her down, though, and now she's one of the most important cogs in the women's division. She's entertaining, too.

Another Winner: Steven Richards. Remember his days as a member of Raven's Flock? Remember his days as the founding member of Right To Censor? Remember the night he brought out former WCW tag team champs Kronik to attack The Undertaker? So do we, and it's pretty obvious that despite only being a second to the more assertive Victoria, he's experiencing the best run of his career.



The Smackdown tag title match (top) was another WM bout that would have benefited from more time. Charlie Haas and Shelton Benjamin (above) were big winners just because they won the match. But the biggest winner in the match, somehow, was Chavo Guerrero Jr.

The Match: Charlie Haas and Shelton Benjamin vs. Eddie and Chavo Guerrero Jr. vs. Chris Benoit and Rhyno in a triple threat match for the Smackdown tag team title

The Action: The men engaged in a pre-bell brawl, but once things settled down, Chavo and Haas were left in the ring to officially kick off the match. Chavo took control early. First he struck Haas with a back suplex, and after Haas tagged in Benoit, Chavo kept control by laying out Benoit with a back suplex before tagging in Uncle Eddie. Eddie slammed Benoit's head into the turnbuckle, but Benoit retaliated with a series of devastating knife-edge chops.

Benoit tagged in his partner, Rhyno, and the match intensity picked up. After being thrown into the turnbuckles, Rhyno came back at Eddie with a powerslam, which led to a near-fall. Looking for a breather, Eddie tagged in Benjamin, who immediately struck Rhyno with a chop and a back elbow before tagging in Haas. Together, Team Angle sent Rhyno to the mat with a scintillating double-dropkick, but Chavo broke up the subsequent pinfall attempt.

Rhyno made his way back to his corner and tagged in Benoit, who attacked Haas with a couple of quick suplexes before tagging Rhyno back in. After taking some punishment from Rhyno, Haas tagged Benjamin back into the match. Benjamin, however, didn't fare much better; after being tossed into the turnbuckles, he tagged Eddie to make his escape. Having rested on the ring apron for a couple of minutes, the older Guerrero started working over Rhyno with kicks and suplexes, forcing Rhyno to tag in Benoit, who hit the first big move of the match when he caught Eddie with a superplex. Benoit kept the pressure on by locking Eddie in the Crippler crossface, but Haas, fearing that Eddie would tap out, broke the hold. Haas then broke up an attempted cover by Eddie after he hit Benoit with a brainbuster.

Eddie tagged Chavo into the match, and he quick-

ly became a victim of three Benoit German suplexes—and he only missed receiving a fourth because he was lucky enough to tag in Benjamin while Benoit was trying to give it to him. The match then broke down into a wild fiasco that saw Benjamin take advantage of a Rhyno gore on Chavo to score the pin.

The Winners: Team Angle, when Benjamin pinned Chavo at 8:36.

The Real Winner: Chavo Guerrero Jr. For the longest time, Chavo was considered a respectable mid-carder, but he wasn't showing up on anyone's radar. In fact, if WCW had released him in the late-1990s, there's a good chance that nobody would have noticed. He was just another mid-carder on a roster full of mid-carders. Now jump ahead to 2003. Chavo has become an integral part of WWE's tag team division. Want proof? Of the six wrestlers that competed in the triple threat tag team match, Chavo easily gave the best showing. Years from now, this might be looked at as one of the best matches of his career.

The Real Losers: Rob Van Dam, Kane, Lance Storm, Chief Morley, Three-Minute Warning, The Dudley Boyz, and every other Raw tag team wrestler who wasn't featured on the actual pay-per-view. There's a reason why Smackdown's tag team match was kept on the pay-per-view and Raw's was bumped to *Sunday Night Heat.* We have confidence that you can figure out, after looking at the two rosters, why that was the case.

More Winners: Team Angle. Despite being a part of WWE's main roster for less than four months, Haas and Benjamin have adjusted well to WWE's rigorous schedule and demanding in-ring expectations. They look timid every once in a while, but this team of blue-chippers looked like it belonged at WrestleMania, which means that it probably did.

The Match: Shawn Michaels vs. Chris Jericho

The Action: This was the match that had the potential to steal the show at WrestleMania. Had there not been several other outstanding bouts, it might have. In the match's opening couple of minutes, HBK and Y2J seemed content to feel each other out. At one point, Michaels scaled the ropes and then laid across them in an obvious attempt to show up the first-ever undisputed WWE champion. Soon HBK sent Jericho to the outside and followed up with a baseball slide that sent Jericho reeling.

Back inside the ring, Michaels came off the top rope with a superb bodypress, but Jericho turned the maneuver to his advantage and secured a near-fall. Michaels thought that he had regained momentum when he put Jericho in a figure-four, but Jericho reversed it. Shortly after the six-minute mark, the fight spilled to the outside once again, and Jericho applied the Walls of Jericho—a hold specifically

Chris Jericho won while losing to Shawn Michaels at 'Mania. He continued to build his case for being the strongest all-around star of the Raw brand and continued to establish a stronger, more dangerous persona.

designed to weaken the lower back, Michaels' main weakness. Luckily for Michaels, Jericho had to break the hold in order to roll back into the ring and avoid a double-countout.

Jericho maintained the intensity by ramming Michaels already-weakened back into the ringpost. Back inside the ring, he seemed to be on cruise control as he hit a suplex and followed that up by yelling, "I'm better than you!" directly into Michaels' face.

The look on Michaels' face seemed to suggest he couldn't even believe he was back in the ring in a grueling WM match. Those who wondered if HBK was making a mistake when he returned to the ring last year aren't wondering any longer.

At this point, the two men started putting everything on the line. Jericho positioned Michaels for a superplex, but Michaels punched Jericho down and landed a flying elbowdrop directly onto Y2J's chest. HBK then went for a superkick, but Jericho ducked and maneuvered Michaels back into the Walls of Jericho. After reaching the ropes to break the hold and later avoiding a suplex attempt, Michaels rolled Jericho up for a near-fall. Not too long after connecting with a flying forearm, Jericho kipped up and struck one of Michaels' signature poses. Michaels responded by kipping up and tagging Jericho with his own flying forearm. Then he went on to hit a moonsault, which really got the crowd going.

At this point, Jericho started pulling nearly every maneuver out of his arsenal to try to put Michaels away. He tried a Northern Lights suplex, a clothesline, a bulldog, a lionsault, the Walls of Jericho yet again, a backbreaker, and a superkick—all to no avail. Michaels stubbornly fought back. Right about then, HBK started to make his comeback. After working Jericho over with a series of rabbit punches, Michaels attempted to put Jericho into the Walls of Jericho but instead turned it into a catapult into the ringpost, which probably worked even better. Around the 19-minute mark, Jericho tried to go for a superplex, but Michaels fought Jericho off and responded with a flying elbowdrop and an attempt at a superkick, which Jericho ducked and turned into, you guessed it, the Walls of Jericho. But the referee broke the hold after Michaels made it to the ropes. Michaels then hit his superkick, but Jericho somehow kicked out, slowly rose to his feet, and went for a suplex. Michaels slid out of the attempt and rolled up a surprised Jericho for the pinfall.

The Winner: Michaels, when he pinned Jericho at 22:29.

The Real Winner: Michaels, who proved once again that his "Showstopper" nickname is appropriate. Even though he only wrestles a few times per year, every time he steps in the ring, he gives a performance that wrestlers who are a decade younger and whose bodies are in much better shape envy, and the only word for that is "remarkable."

The Real Loser: Jeff Hardy, who was involved in this feud from nearly the beginning and probably would have liked to have seen this match turned into a three-way.

Another Winner: Jericho, who continues to outperform most of the main-eventers who are booked in matches above him. No matter what situation Jericho is put in, he absolutely shines—and he might be the only Raw superstar who actually elevates other wrestlers consistently.

Another Loser: Christian, who was also an integral part of the feud between Jericho and Michaels, yet didn't get a mention on the pay-per-view broadcast.

The Match: Triple-H vs. Booker T for the Raw championship

The Action: Booker entered this match with a lot to prove—to fans, to Triple-H, and, most importantly, to himself—and he took the fight to Triple-H early and aggressively. Booker started his assault with chops, punches, and a backdrop. Helmsley, on the defensive, went to the outside to collect himself, but

Booker followed him and tossed him into the ringpost. Once back inside the ring, Booker kept the pressure on with a series of roundhouse and spin kicks, but Helmsley fought back as the match spilled back outside around the three-minute mark. Triple-H threw Booker into the steel ring steps, and then took his time as he delivered a guillotine elbow to Booker's head, which was hanging over the ring apron.

Triple-H kept the offensive by gaining two quick near-falls, one after a neckbreaker, the other following a vicious-looking spinebuster. He followed up with a clothesline that yielded yet another two-count. But just when everyone thought the champ was on a roll, Booker fought back, first with punches and then some momentum-changing maneuvers such as a DDT, a sidewalk slam, and a flying forearm, the last of which earned *him* a two-count. Triple-H put Booker in a sleeperhold to slow the match down, but Booker wouldn't have any of that, as he rammed Helmsley into the turnbuckles to force the champ to break it.

Triple-H broke the hold all right, but he couldn't keep Booker from delivering a devastating spinebuster that earned him another near-fall. However, the momentum changed again after Booker crotched himself on the ring ropes after a failed sidekick attempt. Ric Flair, who accompanied Helmsley to ringside, took immediate advantage of the situation by dropping him onto the ring steps and then rolling him back into the ring for a waiting Triple-H. "The Game" immediately applied an Indian deathlock. Though Booker eventually escaped by making it to the ropes, the damage had been done. He couldn't put much weight on it for the rest of the match, and the fact that Triple-H followed the hold with a sustained attack on the weakened knee didn't help matters. He did sustain short offensive bursts, but he wasn't able to withstand the combination of Triple-H's tenacity and Flair's interference. His last chance at winning the match came when he hit a Harlem hangover for a two-count, but Flair put Triple-H's foot on the ropes to stop the count. One pedigree later, the match was over.

Booker T may have turned in a very good all-around performance against Triple-H (left), but this was a match in which the real winner was simply the man on top of his foe at the end (below), and the real loser was simply the man who lost.

The Winner: An exhausted Triple-H, when he pinned Booker T at 18:34 to retain the Raw championship.

The Real Winner: Triple-H, who survived yet another pay-per-view with his championship intact. The guy simply doesn't lose anymore!

The Real Loser: Booker T. Not only was he systematically taken apart by "The Cerebral Assassin," he

also lost the match when a nearly immobile Triple-H draped one hand over Booker's chest—maybe the most humiliating successful cover by an opponent in Booker's career. The rather definitive loss also poses a huge question about Booker's future: Now that his dreams of winning the Raw championship have been snuffed out, where does he go from here? With Diesel returning and Bill Goldberg debuting, we're guessing back to the mid-card.

More Losers: Other Raw wrestlers on the cusp of the top tier who think they have a chance of defeating Triple-H for the title. If Booker T didn't do it, it's hard to believe anyone else will be given the chance. Nash and Goldberg will keep him busy for a while.

The Match: Vince McMahon vs. Hulk Hogan in a streetfight

The Action: The match that was 20 years in the making provided 20 minutes of brutal intensity. It began with a staredown in mid-ring, and it quickly escalated into an all-out brawl. McMahon took a swing at Hogan, and Hogan responded by tackling the WWE chairman and assaulting him with punches. McMahon recovered and landed an elbow to Hogan's head and a rather weak-looking clothesline, and he continued his assault by cornering Hogan against the turnbuckles and punishing him with repeated blows to the head and body. When Hogan started to fight back, McMahon bailed to the floor and brutally rammed Hogan's arm into the ringpost not once, but twice.

Around the four-minute mark, McMahon engaged Hogan up in a test of strength. Hogan tried to get up on three different occasions, but McMahon kicked him back down twice and, finally, out of the ring. Somehow, Vince McMahon was making the immortal Hulk

Could Vince McMahon match the strength of Hulk Hogan (right)? Did Hogan have one more Superman comeback in him (below)? Yes and yes. Criticize the boss for hyping his match over the others at 'Mania, but only if you give him and the "Hulkster" credit for delivering a dramatic bout.

Hogan look very mortal.

Once on the outside, McMahon threw Hogan into the ringside barricade and then the ringpost. Hogan returned the favor and then smacked McMahon with a chair, busting the WWE chairman wide open. After a short return to the ring, during which Hogan concentrated on pounding McMahon's head to open up the cut even further, the match once again spilled to the outside. After absorbing a chair shot across his back, McMahon crumbled Hogan with a fair-in-a-streetfight low blow. Then he went under the ring and pulled out a ladder, which he set up between the Spanish and Smackdown announcers' positions. He then attacked Hogan with one of the Spanish announce team's monitors, positioned him on the table, and climbed the ladder. After mocking the crowd by cupping his hands to his ear a la Hogan, McMahon jumped and legdropped Hogan through the table while a good portion of the crowd in attendance chanted, "Holy s___! Holy s___!"

Sensing victory, McMahon rolled Hogan back into the ring, but he only got a pair of two-counts, prompting him to go back under the ring and pull out a steel pipe. However, Hogan recovered in time to give McMahon a low blow. Suddenly, a man wearing a trench coat entered the ring, and when he took it off, it was clear that "Rowdy" Roddy Piper had returned to WrestleMania.

Piper picked up the pipe, seemingly waiting for McMahon to rise so he could send him back down to the mat. When it came time to lay out McMahon, though, Piper turned his back to the WWE chairman and clocked Hogan over the head with the pipe. As Piper left the ringside area, McMahon went for a pinfall, but the resilient Hogan kicked out. McMahon reached for the pipe again, but this time referee Brian Hebner refused to let him have it. (Apparently even streetfights do have rules.) McMahon then put the boots to Hebner, driving him through the ropes and out of the ring before waving toward the backstage area for referee Sylvain Grenier, the referee who screwed Hogan in his match against the Rock at No Way Out.

With the referee clearly on his side, McMahon kept Hogan on the mat with a legdrop and went for a pinfall, but Hogan kicked out at two and started his Superman comeback. Hogan laid out McMahon with a punch and chased his referee from the ring. Three legdrops and the return of referee Hebner was all Hogan needed to secure the win.

The Winner: Hogan, when he pinned McMahon at 20:58.

The Real Winner: McMahon, who, at 58, wrestled maybe the best match of his limited career. Physically, he looked just as impressive as Hogan (and maybe even more so), and athletically, he looked better than any other 58-year-old we've seen hit the ring. McMahon was also smart to place his match third from the top and not as the last match, which had been feared in the days leading up to the pay-per-view. An all-around top-notch effort from the WWE chairman.

The Rock punched his way to victory over Steve Austin at WM. Despite the abbreviated prematch hype, these two still put on one of the better matches on the card.

The Real Losers: Any wrestling insider who questioned the decision to book Hogan vs. McMahon. The match wasn't a scientific classic and didn't do much to build the future of WWE, but it was a great brawl worthy of the attention it was given. And, like other matches on WrestleMania, this one probably doesn't have even the slightest chance of happening again, which made it that much more special.

Another Winner: "Rowdy" Roddy Piper. Who would have thought that wrestling's favorite Scots-

man would have been given another chance to shine at WrestleMania—especially considering all the negative things he's had to say about WWE and Vince McMahon in recent years.

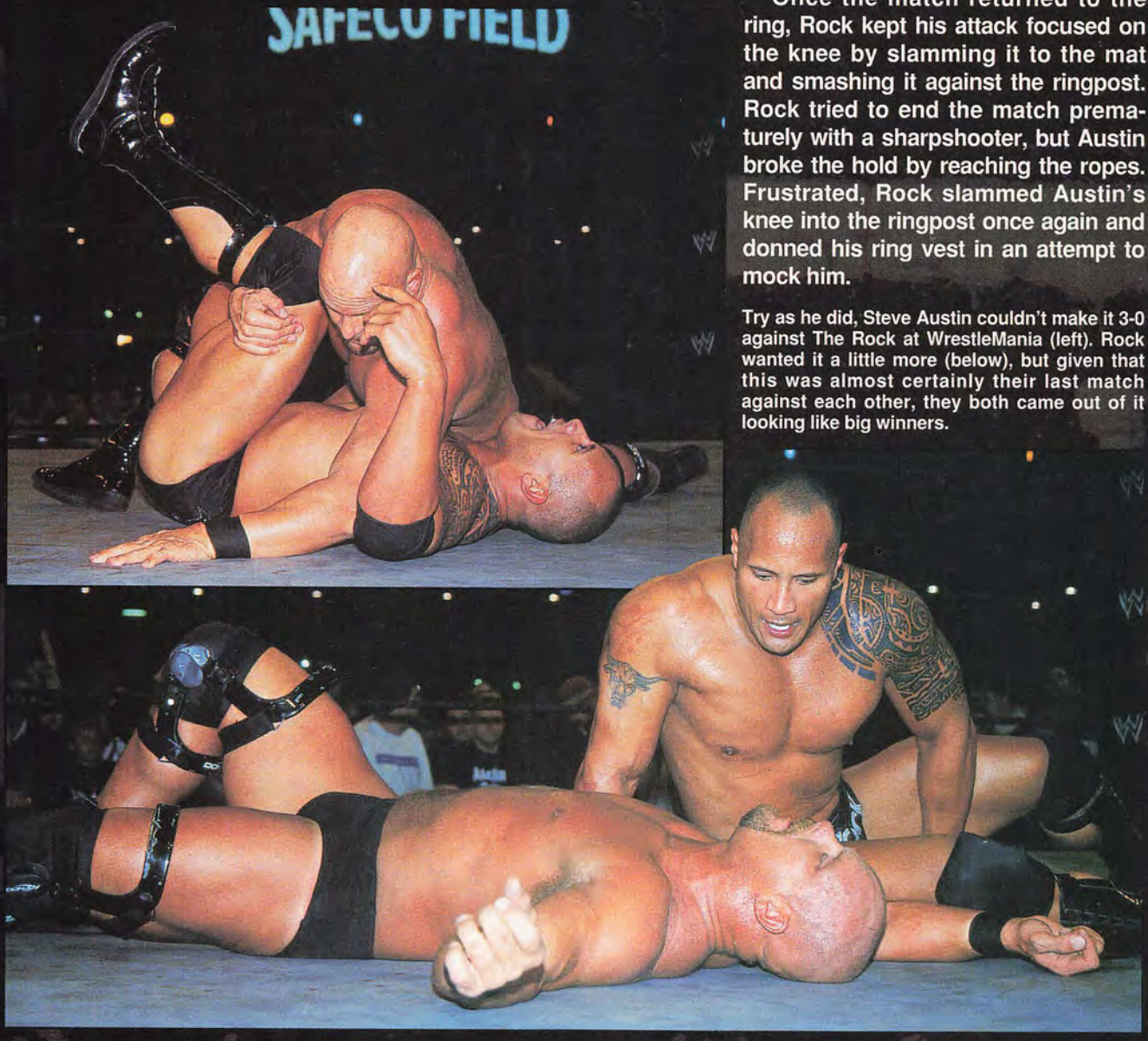
Another Loser: "Rowdy" Roddy Piper. Considering all the negative things he's had to say about WWE and Vince McMahon in recent years, does he have any credibility left?

Yup, Another Winner: "Rowdy" Roddy Piper again. Well, at least Sable's return to WWE TV two nights later makes him a bit more credible than at least one other WWE employee.

Yup, Another Loser: Vince McMahon's gnarled forehead. That thing was so bloody and swollen that it could have been mistaken for steak tartar.

The Match: The Rock vs. Steve Austin
The Action: Rock vs. Austin III (WrestleMania edition only) had all of a month's buildup, and it sure seemed that way. However, that didn't stop the combatants from treating with any less importance. Austin went for a quick end to the match by attempting a Stone-Cold stunner in the opening minute, but Rock escaped to the floor. Austin followed Rock to the outside, where he dropped him over the security barricade and whipped him into the ringpost. Momentum could have swung when Austin and Rock returned to the ring, but Austin kept the pressure on. "The Rattlesnake" planted Rock with a suplex, kept him on the mat with a clothesline, and then tried to cut off his air supply by choking him on the middle rope. Austin's run of good luck ran out when the referee reprimanded Austin for his actions. With Austin distracted, Rock clipped Austin's knee to turn the tide. When Austin went to the outside to gain a short respite, Rock followed, chop-blocking the same knee a second time.

Once the match returned to the ring, Rock kept his attack focused on the knee by slamming it to the mat and smashing it against the ringpost. Rock tried to end the match prematurely with a sharpshooter, but Austin broke the hold by reaching the ropes. Frustrated, Rock slammed Austin's knee into the ringpost once again and donned his ring vest in an attempt to mock him.



Try as he did, Steve Austin couldn't make it 3-0 against The Rock at WrestleMania (left). Rock wanted it a little more (below), but given that this was almost certainly their last match against each other, they both came out of it looking like big winners.

WRESTLEMANIA XIX

The *real* winners & losers!

Mock him it did, because Austin responded with a series of punches, a Thesz press, and even a Rock bottom, which earned him a two-count. "The Rattlesnake" was the first to his feet, but he was also the first one back on his back, as Rock surprised him with his own version of the Stone-Cold stunner. However, Rock only managed a near-fall, and the match continued.

It sure didn't take long for another near-pinfall to occur, though. Around the 13-minute mark, Austin caught Rock with a stunner, but somehow Rock kicked out, disappointing the pro-Austin crowd. When Austin went to confront the referee about a perceived slow count, Rock struck with a low blow and a spinebuster that led to the people's elbow. Three Rock bottoms later, Rock had earned his first WrestleMania victory over Austin.

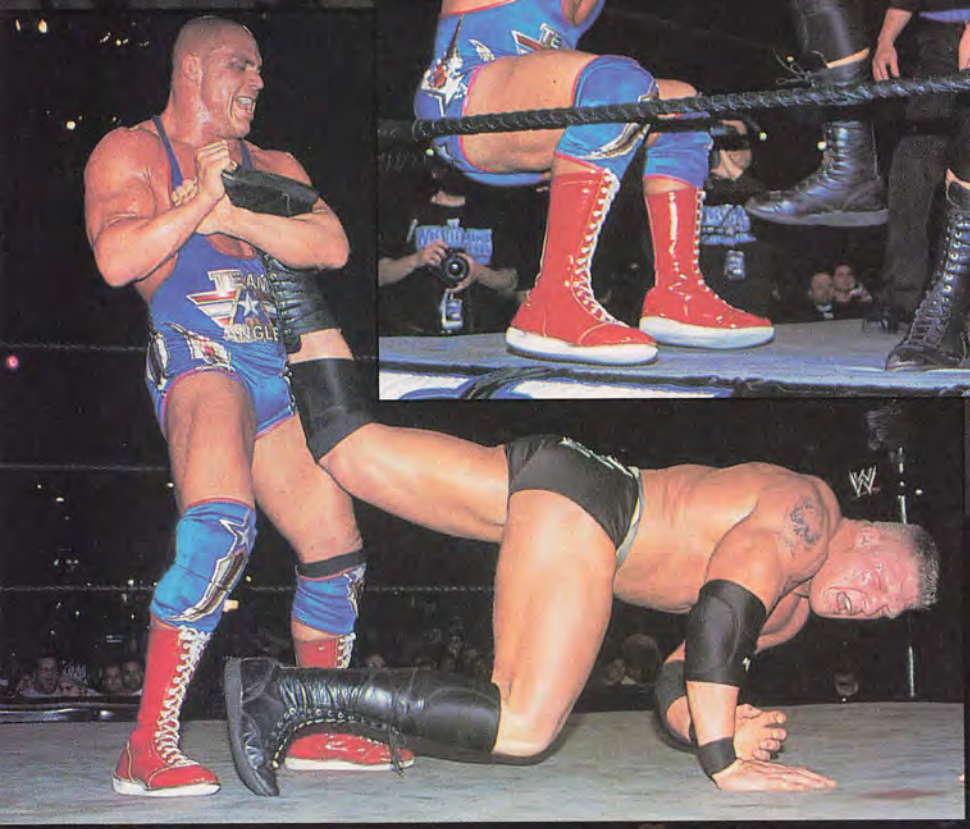
The Winner: The Rock, when he pinned Austin at 18:01.

The Real Winner: The Rock, who finally got a clear, decisive, interference-free win against Austin at WrestleMania. While we don't believe that an 0-3 record against Austin would have meant much to Rock in the long term, it must be nice for him to finally have that win on his record—if for no other reason than we can't talk about it anymore.

The Real Loser: Austin, who was fired one night later on *Raw* following a revelation that his neck isn't in the shape it needs to be in for him to participate in a rigorous sport such as professional wrestling. Of course, we don't believe that he'll never wrestle again (nobody seems to live up to that promise), but we sure would have appreciated him going out on a better note than losing clean to his main rival at WrestleMania.

Other Winners: Rock again and Austin, who made what was likely their last match against each other—and certainly their last WrestleMania match against one another—quite memorable.

Another Loser: The Hurricane. How funny would it have been to see Hurricane run out and choke-slam Rock while the referee was distracted? We know our WrestleMania party would have popped big time for that. Instead, he didn't make it onto the card at all.



The anklelock didn't net Kurt Angle a WrestleMania win this year (below). This was Brock Lesnar's WrestleMania (right), the night he was to be crowned Smackdown champ for a second time.

The Match: Kurt Angle vs. Brock Lesnar for the Smackdown title

The Action: Nineteen years ago, who ever thought that the most anticipated match of a WrestleMania would one day feature two premier amateur wrestlers? Probably nobody. In fact, it seems odd writing it now, even after we've already watched it!

Angle and Lesnar stuck to their amateur roots very early in this match, starting out with simple grappling holds such as headlocks,

armbars, and waistlocks, but the tempo quickened within the first few minutes. Around the four-minute mark, Lesnar caught Angle with a powerslam, but Angle immediately responded with a German suplex. Lesnar retaliated by dropping Angle with a big, meaty clothesline. About a minute later, Lesnar continued his assault by press-slamming Angle in the middle of the ring. But no matter what Lesnar did, Angle stuck to his game plan and kept chipping away at the big man's armor.

After a quick trip to the floor, during which Angle took control, the Olympian hit a pair of suplexes and then slowed the match down with the little-used bow-and-arrow submission hold. When Lesnar tried to escape the hold, Angle smartly adjusted by turning it into a chinlock. After breaking the hold, Angle continued his suplex-fest by sending Brock sailing over top of him with a devastating overhead release suplex. Seconds later, Angle sent Lesnar to the outside with a running knee—not exactly smart thinking on Angle's part.

When Brock returned to the ring, he seemed to have more oxygen running through his body, and he immediately took Angle to the mat with a spinebuster that exhausted both men. When they arose from the mat, they traded blows before Brock took control and sent Angle flying with two suplexes of his own. Somehow, Angle recovered quickly enough to surprise Lesnar with his triple-rolling German suplex maneuver. A minute later, after a botched attempt at an F5, Angle was in control with his anklelock submission hold, but Lesnar made it to the ropes to break the hold.

Around the 16-minute mark, Angle scored with the first decisive maneuver of the match, his Angle slam. Lesnar, refusing to lose, kicked out and reversed a second attempt at an Angle slam into a small package for a near-fall. Sensing opportunity and Angle's rising frustration, Lesnar delivered an F5, but Angle kicked out of the subsequent pinfall. Minutes later, after another successful F5, Lesnar went to the top rope and attempted a shooting star press. Cringe time! Cringe time! Lesnar came up well short and landed on his head in one of the scariest moments in wrestling history. Ever resilient, Lesnar somehow shrugged off the pain (days later it was learned that he had suffered a concussion) and managed to hit Angle with a third F5 for the win.

The Winner: Lesnar, when he pinned Angle at 21:02 to win the Smackdown championship.

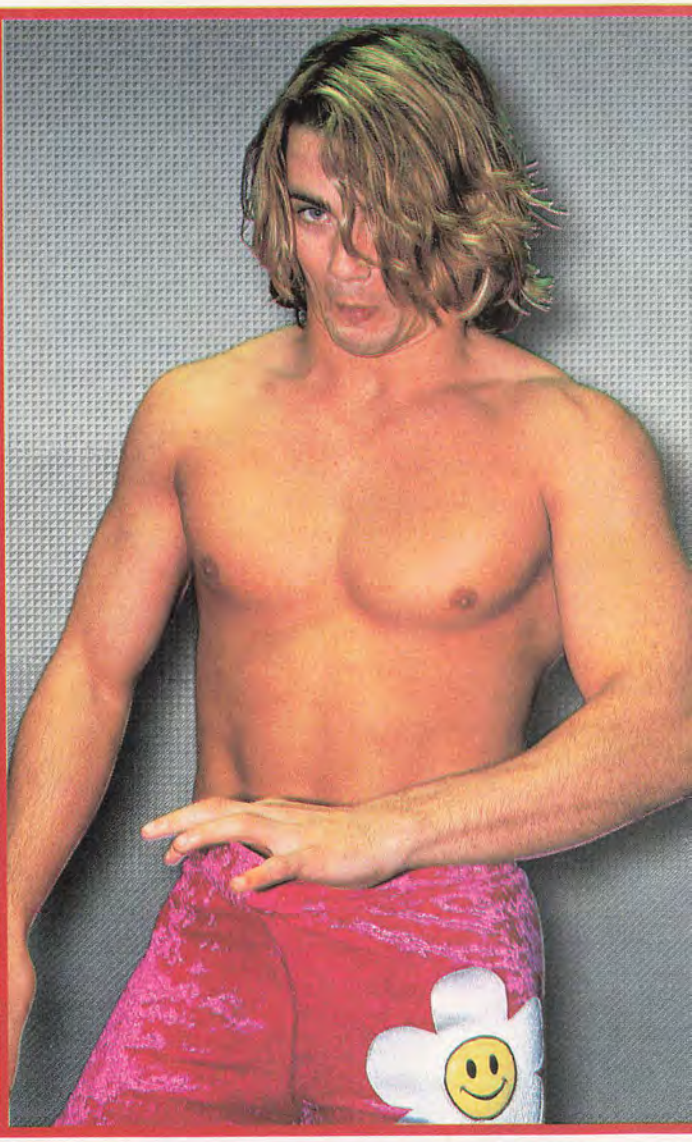
The Real Winner: Angle, who entered the match needing neck surgery to repair spinal damage and thus was supposed to wrestle a safe match, yet ended up delivering one of the best matches of his career. While we don't condone Angle's decision to wrestle with such a serious neck injury, we will commend him on his gutsy performance. He didn't hold back one iota. The man is an amazing performer.

The Real Loser: Vince McMahon, who never should have allowed the match to take place no matter what Angle said to convince him otherwise. Not only was he putting his company at risk if Angle suffered a serious in-ring injury, he was also risking the life of one of his employees.

Lesnar was, for at least one obvious reason, one of the big winners of the night. He was also a huge winner simply by virtue of the fact that he didn't become a tragic loser at the end of his match.

Another Winner: John Cena, who was probably hoping to see Lesnar win, so his feud with him could be over the Smackdown title.

Yet Another Winner: Lesnar, who defied possible paralysis (or worse!) after landing on his head during his attempt at the shooting star press. There's no reason that a man his size should be attempting that maneuver in such an exhausted state; it's highly doubtful that we'll ever see him use it again. □



CLASS ACTS

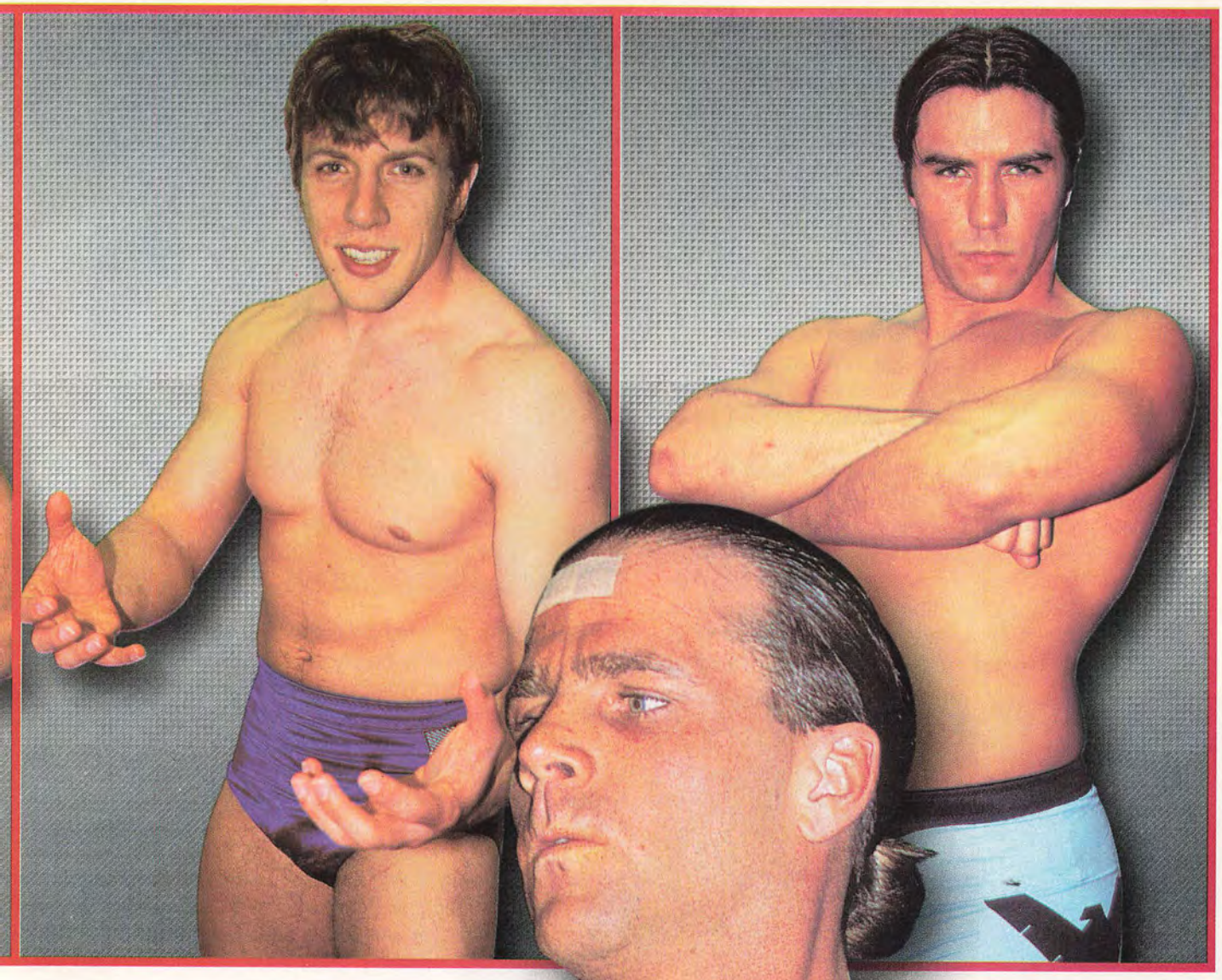
A Close-Up Look At Shawn Michaels' Honor Society

By Harry Burkett

SHAWN MICHAELS TAKES his legacy very seriously, as he proved during his intense feud with Bret Hart in the 1990s. Michaels was obsessed with surpassing "The Excellence Of Execution"—both in the ring and in the minds of the fans. But when severe back injuries forced "The Heartbreak Kid" into a four-year hiatus, the question of who was superior—Michaels or Hart—was still a debatable point.

Despite his busted back, Michaels' passion for the business was unrelenting, and that led him to open a training school in 2000. Little did Michaels realize that a new generation of athletes, inspired by HBK's mix of Lucha Libre and American high-impact wrestling, would travel to the hot and grainy climes of San Antonio, Texas, instead of the cold and barren landscape of Calgary, Alberta. Soon, the Shawn Michaels Wrestling Academy surpassed the Hart Dungeon as wrestling's ultimate fraternity.

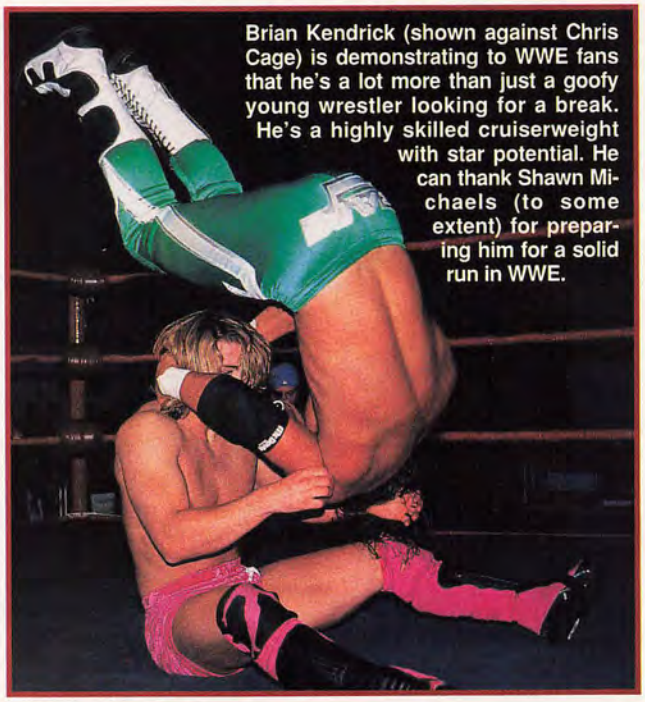
Several of Michaels' trainees have earned WWE developmental contracts during their young careers. They have also helped to inspire the quiet but exciting revolution on the independent circuit—namely the trend toward hard-hitting



scientific wrestling—in promotions such as Ring of Honor and the East Coast Wrestling Association, and are now spreading their influence to NWA-TNA's X division. But will Brian Kendrick, American Dragon, Paul London, and Michael Shane, HBK's four most promising proteges, have the same impact on the industry as Dungeon graduates of the past 15 years, such as Owen Hart, Chris Benoit, Brian Pillman, Chris Jericho, and Lance Storm?

"The forecast is looking good for all of them," noted *PWI* Editor-in-Chief Dave Lenker. "And the fact that Michaels is a semi-active wrestler again means that he's in a better position to encourage WWE to hire these guys. Between the quality of the training and Michaels' relationship with WWE, these students couldn't have picked a better school."

That leads to the sticky question of who qualifies as a Shawn Michaels graduate. In the beginning, Michaels had a very active role in training the students at the Academy. Aside from teaching the basics, he was involved in the business aspects of the school and promoting the Texas Wrestling Alliance, which was designed to be a showcase for his students. Yet Michaels was still limited in what he could do in the ring,



Brian Kendrick (shown against Chris Cage) is demonstrating to WWE fans that he's a lot more than just a goofy young wrestler looking for a break. He's a highly skilled cruiserweight with star potential. He can thank Shawn Michaels (to some extent) for preparing him for a solid run in WWE.

and wasn't able to demonstrate certain high-risk moves. That's one reason why he chose Rudy Boy Gonzales, who had experience in the old Southwest territory and Mexico, as his trainer. The 20-year veteran was qualified to teach Lucha Libre and the American style.

Michaels' first class of students included Brian Kendrick, Bryan Danielson (American Dragon), Lance Cade, Shooter Schultz, Reuben Cruz, and Jeremy Sage. Because Michaels was still under contract, WWE had the right of first refusal regarding the talent he produced. While this was sometimes frustrating, considering there were opportunities in WCW, ECW, and Japan, it turned out to be a terrific deal for Michaels and his students. That is why Kendrick, Danielson, Cade, and Schultz received developmental contracts almost immediately after their graduations (all but Cade were ultimately released).

As HBK became more serious about resuming his own career in WWE, he turned over the Shawn Michaels Wrestling Academy to Gonzalez, who renamed it the Texas Wrestling Academy and established Extreme Texas Wrestling as a promotion to display the students' talents. By this time, Gonzalez had limited classes to only four or five students per session, which enabled him to individualize the training further for students such as Paul London,

Michael Shane and Paul London have put on some scientific classics in Ring of Honor during the last year (left), at times with Rudy Boy Gonzales, the man who took over Shawn Michaels' school, looking on proudly at ringside (above). Who would have thought HBK would be such a great influence on the stars of tomorrow?

What was somewhat surprising about Michaels as a trainer was that he didn't try to get all his students to pattern their style after his own. American Dragon, for instance, isn't a risk-taking high-flyer. He's tremendous on the mat, as he showed against A.J. Styles recently.

John Hope, and Michael Shane. Michaels still made frequent appearances, demonstrating moves and offering advice. So, while the SMWA became the TWA, the arrangement remained largely the same, with Gonzalez as the hands-on coach and Michaels setting the tone and serving as an inspiration.

Let's take a closer look at the five graduates of the Michaels/Gonzalez school who have made the biggest impacts to date:

Brian Kendrick: Formerly known as Spanky, the baby-faced Kendrick debuted way back in 1996 and honed his skills at the Academy. Much of his career has been intertwined with that of American Dragon, both as a partner and rival. In April 2002, he won Ring of Honor's "Heartbreak Gauntlet," comprised of Kendrick, Dragon, London, Shane, and Hope battling in a series of matches. He was especially popular in Zero-One, where Japanese fans liken him to Leonardo DiCaprio. Now he's making the most of his second chance with WWE. He is everyone's favorite underdog on the Smackdown roster, and a top contender for Matt Hardy's WWE cruiserweight title.

American Dragon: Although Dragon has a love-hate relationship with Kendrick in the ring, his rivalry with Low-Ki has been even more intense. The biggest win of his career came when he defeated Low-Ki in the final of the 2001 APW King of the Indies Tournament. He also captured the ECWA tag team title with Low-Ki, and later turned against him.

Paul London: His star rose steadily throughout 2002. Although his ETW TV title win over Hobo Joe counts as his only championship victory, his triumph at the 2003 Super 8 was a career breakthrough. He has competed well against Michael Shane and John Hope and had some spectacular matches in ROH, but has yet to dominate previous Michaels graduates.

Michael Shane: For the first few weeks of training, Shane didn't confess to anyone that he was actually Shawn Michaels' nephew. Because Michaels held him to very high standards, and in light of the comparisons to HBK, Shane has been driven to become a bit of a daredevil in the mold of The Hardy Boyz and Rob Van Dam.

John Hope: He rebounded considerably since his opening-round performance against Paul London in last year's "Heartbreak Gauntlet." Unfortunately, Hope underwent knee surgery and, soon after his return to the ring, was forced to undergo shoulder surgery. But his long-term potential is far from hopeless.

Although Michaels' high-flying cruiserweights are getting most of the attention, the school did produce wrestlers of various styles. In terms of size and sheer presence, Lance Cade—at 6'5" and 261 pounds—seems to have the most potential for a main-event career in WWE, but he is still competing in Ohio Valley at this time. Likewise, Shooter Schultz, who was a major player in Memphis before WWE terminated that developmental program, is an excellent mat technician. It remains to be seen whether Schultz will resume what had been a promising career.

Other notable trainees include Ikaika Loa, the largest wrestler to come out of the school, a former shootfighter known as Oz (whose name no doubt pays homage to Michaels' good friend Kevin Nash), Chris Marval, and Simply Luscious, the most acclaimed female trainee so far.

There is no doubt that Shawn Michaels would like to be remembered as a showstopper and for his own exploits inside the ring. And he will be. But Michaels can also take solace in his living legacy, as his former students perpetuate his enthusiasm and style for years to come. □

Photos by Joe Zanolle

LONDON CALLING!

Shawn Michaels' Protégé Wins 2003 Super 8!

By Harry Burkett

WHAT IS THE next big *concept?* Many insiders are convinced that the concept of athleticism and sportsmanship, as demonstrated by Ring of Honor and, to a lesser degree, NWA-TNA's X division, is the template for WWE to follow. They insist that pro wrestling needs less attitude and more credibility. For the past seven years, the East Coast Wrestling Association's Super 8 Tournament has been a haven for this style of wrestling, shying away from flaming tables matches and foam middle fingers.

The 2003 Super 8 participants, from left to right, starting with the back row: Chris Cage, Brian Kendrick, Sedrick Strong, Frankie Kazarian, Alex Arion, Paul London, Chris Sabin, and Chance Beckett. Ring of Honor fans in attendance weren't surprised to see London walk away with the trophy.

Indeed, the St. Matthew's Parish Center. Located just outside Wilmington, Delaware, has become the annual gathering place for hundreds of independent wrestling enthusiasts. Again this year, a field of several dozen wrestlers throughout North America was narrowed down to a lucky eight who had the honor of competing in the Super 8.

But only one man could be the winner. In the 2003 Super 8, Paul London reigned supreme.

"This is, without a doubt, the greatest honor of my career," said an ecstatic London immediately following the April 5 event. "Having the opportunity to wrestle alongside seven other fantastic wrestlers—and to do it in front of such an appreciative crowd—is just phenomenal. When I began my career a couple of years ago, I didn't have any idea that I would go so far so fast. But I couldn't have done it without those other guys in the ring tonight and, of course, Jim Kettner."

Although Kettner has headed the ECWA for more than 35 years, he proudly regards the Super 8—first held in 1997—as the centerpiece of his promotional calendar. "The Super 8 came off pretty much without a hitch this year," noted Kettner. "I did have to scramble a

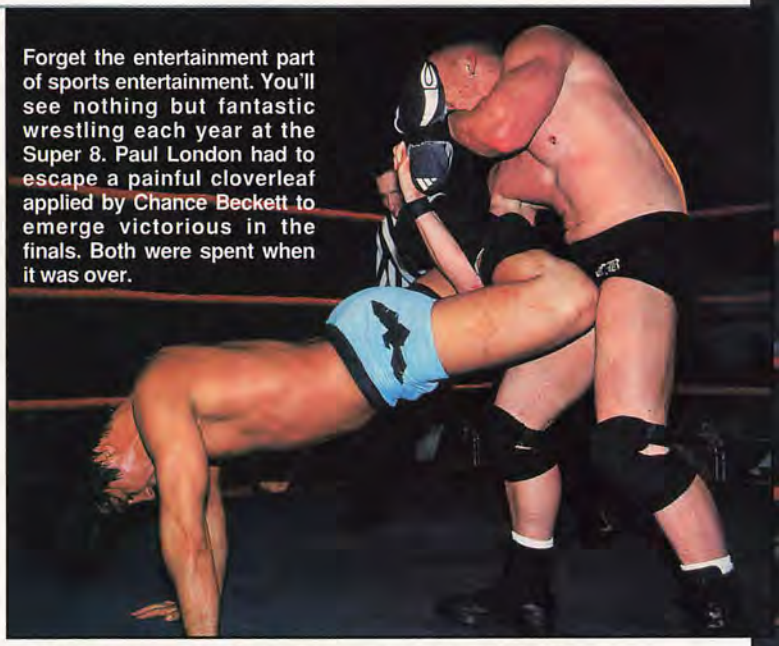
bit to find a replacement for OVW's Johnny Jeter, who suffered an injury and wasn't able to participate. But I think everyone would agree that Frankie Kazarian was a great substitute."

Kazarian, who is based in California and often competes for Japan's Zero-One, proved that competitors who are selected for the Super 8—even as last-minute replacements—are willing to juggle other commitments to be there. Other participants included Chris Cage from Ohio Valley, Chris Sabin from Border City Wrestling, Alex Arion from New England Championship Wrestling and Green Mountain Wrestling, and Sedrick Strong from Florida's IPW Hardcore. Chance Beckett, representing NWA Extreme Canadian Championship Wrestling, traveled all the way from Western Canada. And, perhaps the greatest coup of all, WWE permitted Brian Kendrick to compete in the tournament.

Charlie Haas, who once held the ECWA tag team title with brother Russ, kicked off the festivities. Haas had been unable to compete in the 2002 Super 8 because of a torn ACL, but the Team Angle member told the crowd that his Smackdown tag team championship was proof that the ECWA could serve as a springboard to WWE. He also acknowledged his late brother, and credited Kettner for giving him a start in the business.

The opening bout featured two superstars of tomorrow, as "The Future" Frankie Kazarian squared off against "The Future" Chris Sabin. Kazarian got the Super 8 off to a less-than-sportsmanlike start by viciously slapping Sabin, and Sabin promptly returned the favor. Sabin drilled Kazarian with the first high-impact move of the night, a reverse neckbreaker that forced the back of Kazarian's head across his knee. Kazarian retaliated with a big boot to Sabin's face. Later, Kazarian delivered a cross-bodyblock, and Sabin caught him, fell back, rolled through, and stood up again with Kazarian still in his arms. He then swung around and dropped Kazarian, back-first, across his knee. But it was Kazarian who hit the right move at the right time, finishing off Sabin with a flatliner.

In the next match, Kendrick tried to improve upon his performance in the 2001 Super 8. As Spanky, he lost to American Dragon that year. In 2003, Chris Cage was his opponent. While this bout didn't live up to Spanky-Dragon, Cage surprised the crowd by surviving Kendrick's complicated and oddly named finisher, the sliced bread II. Although Cage proved that particular attempt was definitely not the best thing since sliced bread, he fell prey to a second one, and Kendrick finally avenged his 2001 opening-round loss.



Forget the entertainment part of sports entertainment. You'll see nothing but fantastic wrestling each year at the Super 8. Paul London had to escape a painful cloverleaf applied by Chance Beckett to emerge victorious in the finals. Both were spent when it was over.

JIM KETTNER: THE MAN BEHIND THE SUPER 8

Young Jim Kettner watched in fascination as two midgets—Little Beaver and Sky Low Low—battle each other on the television screen in front of him. His father had just hooked up their new TV set with a UHF antenna, and the teenager was already enthralled by what he was seeing. The next match, Arnold Skoaland vs. Angelo Savoldi, sealed Kettner's fate as a wrestling fan.

Kettner and his friend Earl Holt talked about wrestling every day in school. Kettner and a growing group of pals even wrestled on a couple of rug remnants surrounded with clothesline for ropes. Soon, the teens built their first ring in an old warehouse. The East Coast Wrestling Association was born in August 1967 when they began charging for the shows. As word spread about the fledgling promotion, seasoned pros—including Joe Alfano, Miguel Feliciano, and Victor Rivera—helped the kids further develop their skills.

"Joe Alfano was a Delaware wrestler who worked for the WWWF, and my mother knew him through her job," recalled Kettner. "It was Joe who took me around and introduced me to the business initially and, then, in later years, it was Capt. Lou Albano who opened many doors for me."

Frankie Kazarian used some tough high-impact moves against Chris Sabin (left), while London hammerlocked his way to victory over Alex Arion in the quarterfinals (above) to set up their quarterfinal showdown.

At that point, 1998 Super 8 winner Simon Diamond entered the ring to pay tribute to Jeff Peterson, who died in November of last year. Diamond discussed how he had trained Peterson for his pro career. Diamond added that while he had taught Peterson about wrestling, Peterson—in his inspiring battle against cancer—had taught him about life. He then presented video highlights of Peterson's two Super 8 matches, against Christopher Daniels in 1999 and Jet Jaguar in 2000. Diamond tried to put on a brave face in the ring, but broke down into tears on his way back to the dressing room.

The following bout began the story of the evening. It was a battle between two relative unknowns to ECWA fans: ECCW's Chance Beckett and IPW's Sedrick Strong. Like Kazarian, Beckett annoyed fans with his aggressive behavior. Strong hit "Mr. Showtime" with a boot to the face, which opened a gash on Beckett's chin.

Jim Kettner hiptosses Russ Haas (2000)

By the 1970s, the ECWA had grown from small crowds consisting of families and friends to doing fundraisers for several local charities. The promotion expanded throughout the 1980s, as more schools and civic organizations requested its services.

According to Kettner, though, the ECWA didn't gain its current status in the industry until the 1990s. "That is when we started branching out to bring in more outside talents, develop a more high-tech production, and fine-tune our skills. We also started our relationships with WWE and other independent organizations, and, of course, we began the Super 8 Tournament."

Meanwhile, Kettner pursued his own wrestling career, competing in independents up and down the East Coast, primarily in the late-1970s and early-1980s. His last match occurred in 2000.

"In that entire time, I was only tag team champion on two occasions, and that was it!" joked Kettner. "I was either a bad wrestler or smart promoter—you be the judge!"

Beyond his frequent gigs as a referee and ring announcer, Kettner helped to train several stars, including the Haas brothers, Simon Diamond, and Jeff Peterson (his nephew). He is also credited for exposing wrestlers such as Billy Kidman, Christian, Devon "Crowbar" Storm, Christopher Daniels, and American Dragon to a wider audience.

Even with all of those accomplishments, he specifically cites one night when he was invited to stand in the center of a WWE ring in Madison Square Garden. Said Kettner: "For a guy in the Northeast, to come from the humble beginnings of the ECWA with a lot of dreams, that will forever be my favorite moment in wrestling."

—Harry Burkett

Despite that wound, Beckett executed a double-underhook suplex, rolled through it, executed a second, did another roll-through, and executed a third. Sedrick continued the spine-shattering collisions by spearing Beckett and flattening him with a dive to the arena floor. Back in the ring, Beckett rebounded with an Asai moonsault into a scorpion deathdrop for the pinfall. Afterward, Beckett limped to the dressing room to receive bandages for his busted chin.

Next, Paul London faced "The Golden Greek" Alex Arion. The two men were evenly matched in terms of size, although Arion possessed a slightly more compact frame. He was able to use his lower center of gravity to foil some of London's aerial attack, and nearly won with a particularly close two-count near the end of the match. But London was able to catch Arion off-guard with a quick rollup to score the win. London, who had undergone surgery for a nasal infection a few weeks earlier, seemed (understandably) a bit sluggish compared to some of his Ring of Honor outings. In fact, there was some concern as London tended to his nose immediately following the match.

Nevertheless, the final four wrestlers prepared for the semifinals: Kazarian vs. London, and Kendrick vs. Beckett.

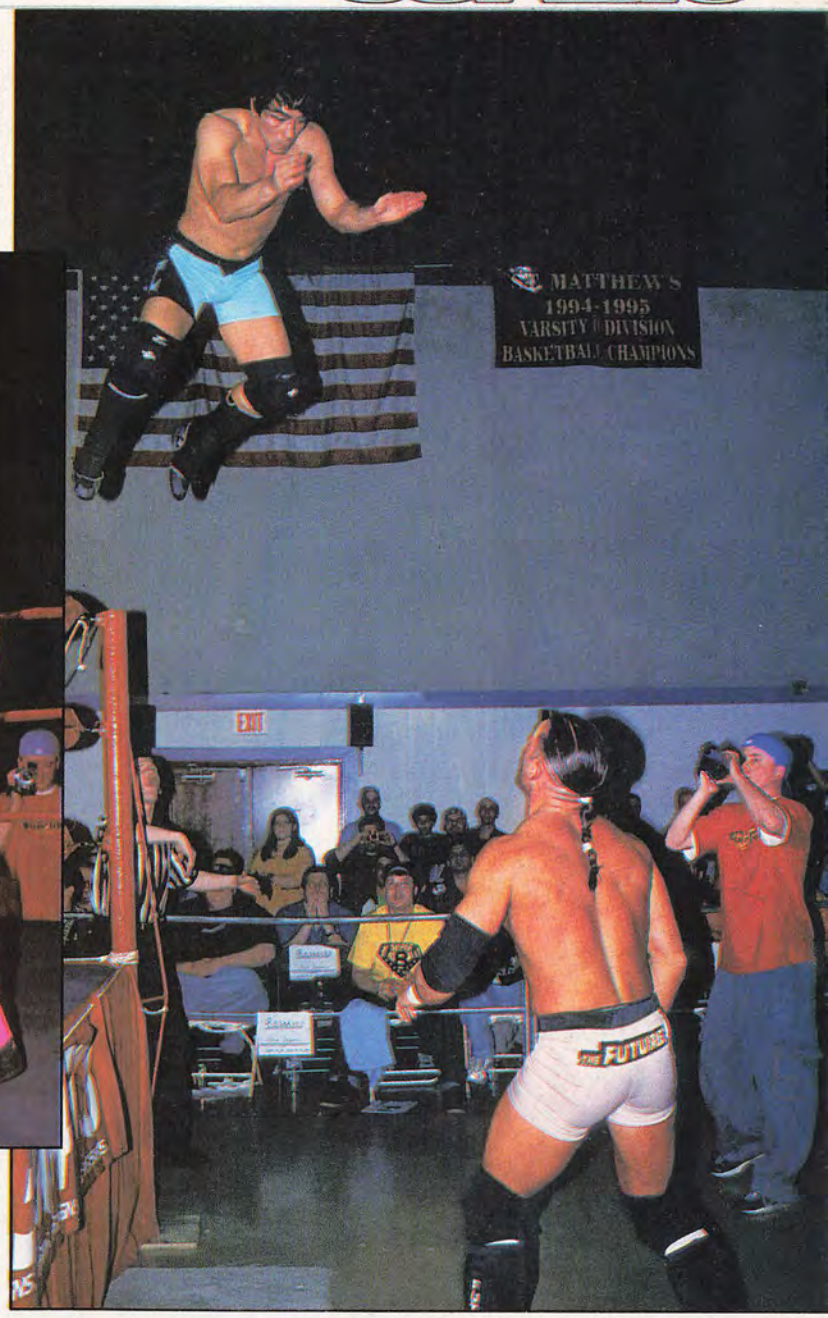
Kazarian, a Killer Kowalski trainee, couldn't wait to pit his style against that of London, a protege of Rudy Boy Gonzales, the former head trainer of the Shawn Michaels Wrestling Academy. Kazarian took the worst spill of the night after London tossed him into the corner, sending "The Future" over the ringpost and onto the floor. London capitalized with a dive off the top turnbuckle and onto Kazarian. In another highlight, London caught Kazarian—who was attempting a springboard flip off the ropes—and pulled him over with a belly-to-back suplex. Kazarian, who had been unsuccessful with most of his top-rope moves, attempted a huracanrana that London blocked and turned into a power bomb. London then delivered a gorgeous shooting star press to win the match.

Against Kendrick in the semifinals, Beckett started bleeding through the bandage on his chin almost immediately. Beckett, who was trained in the Hart Dungeon, utilized a mat-based attack against Shawn Michaels' protege. Kendrick managed to escape a half-Boston crab and a variation of the Texas cloverleaf. "Mr. Showtime," whose bandage had fallen off to reveal his bloody gash, grabbed the back of Kendrick's neck and quickly dropped him to the canvas. Beckett pinned the Smackdown star in the biggest upset of the tournament.

Sedrick Strong opened up a nasty gash on the chin of Chance Beckett early in their quarterfinal match. That didn't stop the persistent Beckett from advancing all the way to the finals ... and almost winning the whole thing!

This led to an interesting final: London, one of the favorites going into the Super 8, against Beckett, a virtual unknown outside of British Columbia. For Beckett, it would truly be "showtime."

London and Beckett caught breathers during the "Summit," the ECWA's version of the Royal Rumble. Japanese Pool Boy was the



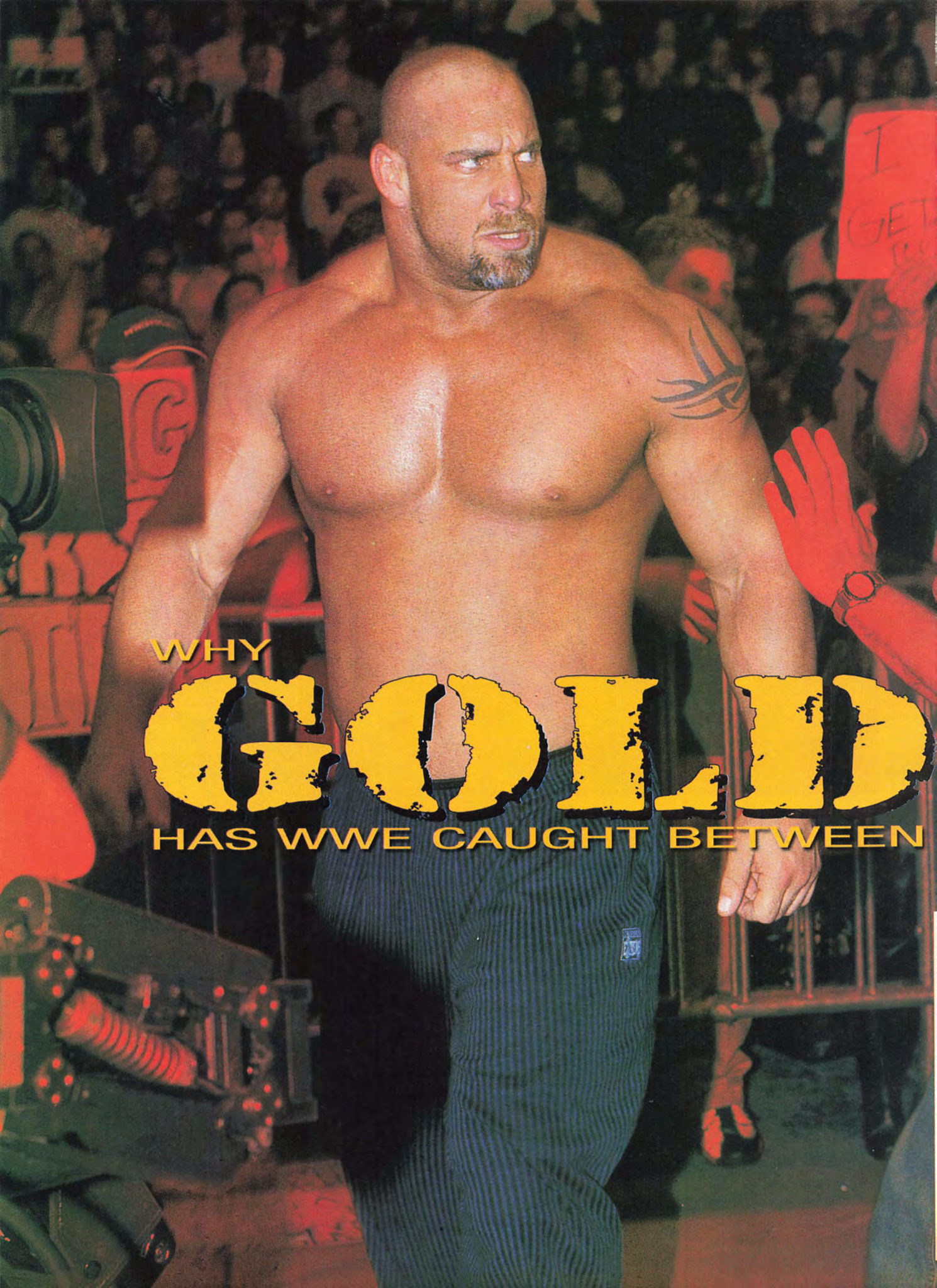
Maybe WWE's Brian Kendrick underestimated Beckett a bit, because although he controlled much of their semifinal match (below), he fell victim to an upset by the British Columbian. Meanwhile, London soared to remarkable heights (right) en route to beating Kazarian in the semis.

unlikely winner, and he was awarded with an immediate shot at ECWA champ Christopher Daniels. "The Fallen Angel" polished off his overmatched challenger with his last rites finishing maneuver.

In the tournament final, Beckett emerged from backstage with another fresh bandage, and ruthlessly slammed London's leg into the ringpost. Beckett snared London in his cloverleaf variation to put pressure on the leg. London screamed in agony, rolled out of the cloverleaf, and sent Beckett flying chin-first into the middle turnbuckle. London launched into his shooting star press. Although that move had succeeded against Kazarian, Beckett kicked out.

By this time, much of the St. Matthews crowd—which had booed Beckett earlier in the evening—was solidly behind him. London then trapped Beckett in a torture device, made famous by Keiji Muto, and the referee asked "Mr. Showtime" whether he wanted to continue. But the show was over, as the referee dropped Beckett's limp arm three times and signaled for the bell. London was declared the winner of the Super 8.

"Chance really inspired me out there," said London. "In fact, he inspired me so much that I almost hated to take the victory away from him. That trophy really belongs to both of us and the other six guys in the Super 8. This is a huge step in my career, and I'm looking forward to the next challenge." □


WHY
GOLD
HAS WWE CAUGHT BETWEEN

"Goldberg's professionalism is certainly not beyond reproach. His public outbursts, temper tantrums, and inability to voice complaints tastefully suggest that Goldberg is more committed to getting his way than contributing to the company."

BERG

THE ROCK AND A HARD PLACE

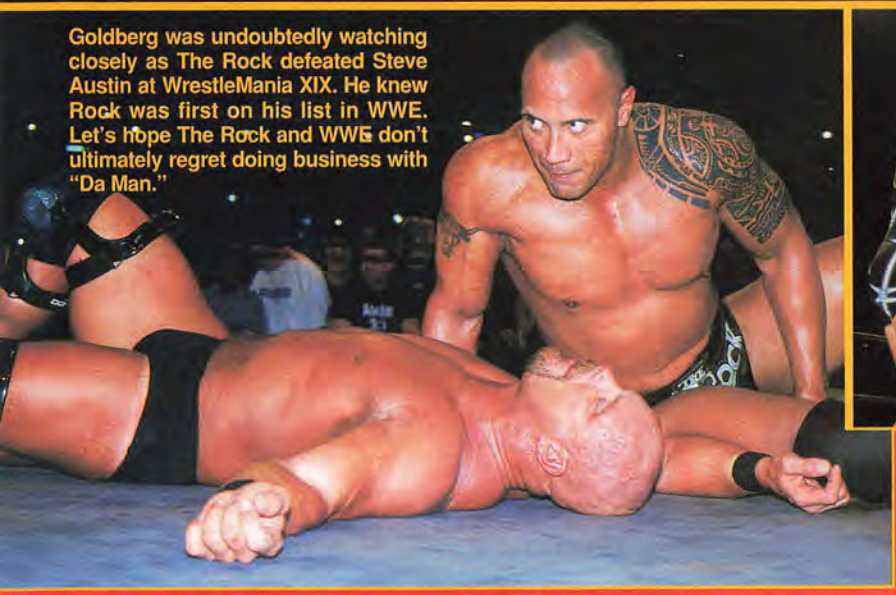
By Frank Krewda

WITH THE CURRENT WWE product still not doing enough to fire up casual fans or boost TV ratings, it only seemed natural for WWE to aggressively pursue Bill Goldberg—one of professional wrestling's two (Sting being the other) last unsigned "big names."

And finally, after months of haggling, Vince McMahon got "Da Man" to sign on da dotted line.

Few details of Goldberg's contract have been publicly divulged. Industry scuttlebutt suggests he'll work a maximum of 100 shows per year, but no more than about 10 per month. Naturally and understandably, both sides have been mum on the money. (Rest assured it's a lot.)

The juiciest (and least concealed) tidbit has been that The Rock played a key role in orchestrating a meeting of the minds. It's no secret Goldberg, one of WWE's most outspoken critics, ended up in Stamford primarily because of The Rock, WWE's most recognizable star. But given Goldberg's dubious opinion of WWE and the wrestling business in general, Rocky's diplomatic coup might turn out to be no coup at all. In fact, the mere addition of Bill Goldberg to the roster could present WWE with more headaches than it could ever want from one man.



Goldberg was undoubtedly watching closely as The Rock defeated Steve Austin at WrestleMania XIX. He knew Rock was first on his list in WWE. Let's hope The Rock and WWE don't ultimately regret doing business with "Da Man."

"Da Man" (shown kicking Bryan Clark) was more than happy to collect big checks for just the occasional match in Japan. The fact that he was in no huge hurry to sign with WWE suggests he probably wouldn't think twice about quitting, either.

THE FIRST BIG TEST

Make no mistake: Bill Goldberg didn't come out of "exile," as WWE called it, to serve as The Rock's footstool. Clearly, The Rock must have understood that he wasn't going to tear down the Goldberg legend in the former WCW World champion's first match in WWE. At best, he'd get in a decent amount of offense in their Backlash showdown before getting speared, jackhammered, and stuffed onto the next flight for Hollywood, which is where he will (figuratively) be again by the time you read this.

While the first Rock-Goldberg match (with the hint of a rematch somewhere down the road, possibly at WrestleMania XX) might offer a gate windfall, it won't necessarily set up the next six months of Raw brand main events the way WWE wants them to be set up. Although initial reaction to this special athlete was passionately positive, there's a segment of fans that will ultimately reject Goldberg simply because he's a former WCW product. There's another segment that will cheer WWE stars against him simply because of loyalty to the company, and no number of character switches or tweaks will dampen their emotional connection.

That first Rock-Goldberg showdown may be a huge hit, but more than ever, Vince McMahon needs to worry about things clicking over the long haul rather than just in next month's PPV main event.

WHO GETS THE PUSH?

Perhaps the only person in WWE who wants Bill Goldberg to succeed more than Bill Goldberg does is Vince McMahon. After all, he went out and snatched up the only man left with enough cache to make a true impact.

Besides, Vince is under pressure from WWE superstars to justify a) Goldberg's "soft" schedule, b) Whatever exorbitant salary Goldberg must have commanded, and c) Goldberg's walk-on to *Raw's* and Backlash's main-event programs.

But since Goldberg will need to be pushed as an unstoppable spearing, jackhammering machine for a while at least, his wins will be other WWE stars' key losses. As many WWE stars have been quick to point out, the Raw roster doesn't have dozens of expendable lower mid-carders who can be fed to Goldberg on TV without a second thought. If the company ever expects to elevate mid-carders on the level of Lance Storm, Buh Buh Ray Dudley, and even someone a bit higher in the pecking order (like RVD), these stars can't all come off looking ridiculously inferior to Goldberg.

Somehow, Vince McMahon and WWE must find a way to squeeze both Bill Goldberg (who can do a lot for WWE in the short term) and some of the rising WWE stars of the future into the spotlight.

COMMITMENT STILL IN QUESTION

Then again, can Vince McMahon trust Bill Goldberg enough to commit WWE resources to a full-fledged main-event push for more than a few months? Should he? It was only a few months ago that Goldberg, then competing in Japan, reiterated his anti-WWE remarks, and hinted very strongly that rumors of an impending deal between him and WWE were exactly that—rumors.

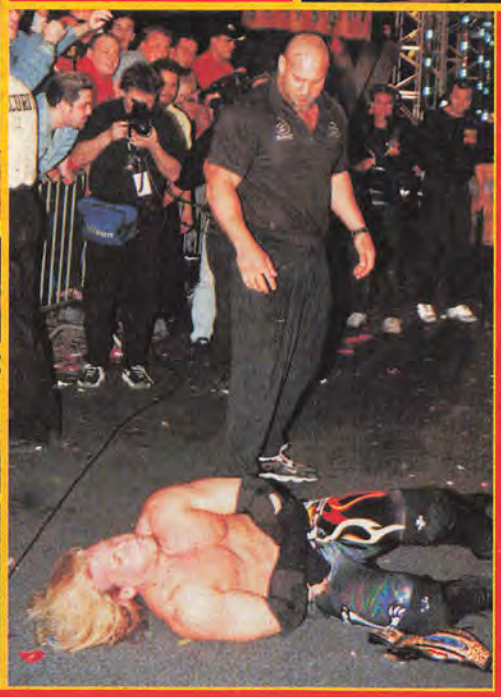
Now that Goldberg has done the direct opposite of what he's consistently said he wasn't sure he could ever do—sign with WWE—Vince must wonder whether Goldberg is committed to doing good by WWE or just in it for a few hefty paychecks.

Goldberg's professionalism is certainly not beyond reproach. His public outbursts, temper tantrums, and inability to voice complaints tastefully suggest that he is more committed to getting his way than contributing to the company.

It's not out of the question Goldberg will develop a real passion for wrestling if his initial experiences with WWE are positive ones. Maybe then he'll be a long-term asset to the company.

How many WWE stars will feel the power of the Goldberg jackhammer? He won't be able to decimate the roster the way he once did in WCW, yet he'll have to be presented as more than just another star. It'll be a delicate balancing act.

Goldberg will have to deal with more than a few people with whom he had issues in WCW, including Chris Jericho (below) and Booker T (below left). Let's hope he goes out of his way to be respectful of and get along with all of his peers.



POTENTIALLY DISRUPTIVE INFLUENCE

Forget potential. Goldberg wasn't in WWE two weeks before reports came out about him being involved in a backstage altercation with Chris Jericho, with whom he once balked at working a long-term program in WCW due to Y2J's smallish build.

It's no secret that some people resent Goldberg for his attitude toward the wrestling business, some for his anti-WWE commentary, others for personal remarks.

Of course, those who go on the record will say Goldberg will be good for business and that he is a welcome addition to WWE. But the more discreet (and scorned) quietly question why he's even in WWE, a place he chastised for most of his abbreviated career.

More importantly and immaturely, some wrestlers still resent Goldberg's meteoric rise to the top in WCW and his immediate inclusion in headline matches. Like many fans, these fellow WWE superstars feel Goldberg's ascent is based much more on looks, intensity, and name recognition than ability.

And what happens if Goldberg grows dissatisfied with his character a la Steve Austin? It's highly unlikely McMahon will come down hard on his new million-dollar man. If he does try to do so, chances are good that Goldberg could easily decide working for WWE is not worth the trouble and walk with little or no notice. Considering the cash he collected from his guaranteed AOL Time Warner contract after WCW was sold to WWE and the money he has made in Japan, it's hard to believe he's desperate for money.

BULL IN A CHINA SHOP

Perhaps the biggest threat to WWE is Goldberg's penchant for causing injury to himself and others. Remember, it was a brutal Goldberg kick to the head that ended Bret Hart's career.

Even more damning was the self-inflicted arm injury Goldberg sustained while throwing an on-air ram directed at Scott Hall. Goldberg lost half a year of in-ring time when his put his arm through a car window during the taping of a *Thunder* vignette.

With all the injuries to WWE's top stars, Vince McMahon can only hope Goldberg's occasional recklessness doesn't short-circuit his or anyone else's career. But he is undoubtedly aware of all the baggage Goldberg has carried with him to WWE. And like any good businessman, he believes the potential rewards (anyone who saw Goldberg during his unbelievable run in 1997-1998 knows they *could* be gigantic) far outweigh the risks in this case. It's hard to argue with his decision to play this ultimate trump card, but he won't be the only person who loses if this gamble doesn't pay off in a big, big way. □

the business page

By Harry Burkett

WWE's conventional wisdom ... The annual NATPE Convention used to be a premier event on WWE's marketing calendar, as executives made their pitches to local television station owners to carry their programs via syndication. As the syndication business has waned in recent years, due to an increased number of network hours on TV, another convention has become a can't-miss event: the Cable Television Association of Marketers Convention.

In fact, the CTAM selected New Orleans as the site of this year's convention, a frequent host city of NATPE. The CTAM Convention is significant to the wrestling industry because much of it has to do with pay-per-view programming. With WWE scheduling brand-specific pay-per-views starting in June, and with NWA-TNA relying on PPV as its primary source of revenue, it has become more important than ever.

At this year's event, WWE's new marketing head, Curt Snyder, spent much of his time promoting the Rock-Goldberg match for Backlash, and educating cable operators about the merits of the brand extension. But what had many cable operators buzzing was the WWE bash at the House of Blues. No company knows how to throw a party like WWE, and many attendees were thrilled by the special appearances of Smackdown General Manager Stephanie McMahon and Raw champion Triple-H.

NWA-TNA had a presence at the convention, too. While TNA didn't have a booth or a big bash, Dixie Carter, representing TNA majority owner Panda Energy, had a number of meetings with cable operators, trying to gain more exposure for her company.

Likewise, former NWA champ Ken Shamrock was scheduled for an appearance, but not with TNA. He was to join Chuck Liddell for a UFC party at the New Orleans Hilton, held on the final night.

WWE was apparently a big hit at the Cable Television Association of Marketers Convention in New Orleans this year. Stephanie McMahon and Triple-H were among those representing the company.

Sable never looked better ... Raw and Smackdown fans who sampled the XWF's In Your Face pay-per-view, which was recently made available to selected carriers, were probably amazed to find Hulk Hogan and Jerry Lawler at a non-WWE event. They were also probably marveling at the eating binge that Roddy Piper must have gone through before knocking Rikishi's noggin with that coconut. Most impressive of all was the late Curt Hennig making his in-ring return.

For those of you who haven't guessed, that XWF pay-per-view is more than 18 months old at this point. Some footage had been used in the 30-minute infomercials that the XWF ran in a few cities before its house show tour went bust. XWF executives, desperate to recoup some of the huge money they lost on the venture, decided to package their November 2001 television tapings into a PPV format.

On the show, Kid Krash (Kid Kash) won a battle royal to become the first XWF cruiserweight champion, Johnny B. Badd (Marc Mero) pinned Norman Smiley, and Buff Bagwell defeated Big Vito. Other stars included Jimmy Snuka, The Nasty Boys, Horace Hogan, Ray Gonzales, Konnan, Juventud Guerrera, Psicosis, and Marty Jannetty. Vampiro beat Curt Hennig in the lackluster main event in less than three minutes.

Perhaps XWF execs are holding off on airing the Hennig-Hogan match also taped at Universal Studios, perhaps for another pay-per-view. We can't wait.

Wrestling and politics are mixing again in Japan! The Great Sasuke (shown against Justin Credible in ECW) won a seat in the conservative Iwate prefecture in that nation and has caused a bit of controversy by refusing to remove his mask.

Japanese Jesse? The Great Sasuke has joined Antonio Inoki and Hiroshi Hase as another wrestler to succeed in Japanese politics, an acceptable practice in "The Land Of The Rising Sun" long before Jesse Ventura became Minnesota governor in the United States. Sasuke won a seat in the conservative Iwate prefecture, located 290 miles north of Tokyo. The former Michinoku Pro star and the first winner of the prestigious cruiserweight J-Crown has always taken great pride in his regional heritage, often calling himself "The North Eastern Hero."

According to Reuters, Sasuke has dismayed fellow legislators by vowing not to remove his mask. Sasuke had worn a mask, usually a black and white model with bright scarlet streaks and golden wings by the eyeholes, during the campaign. His refusal to unmask is particularly controversial in Japan, where battles have already been fought regarding legislators who have refused to wear neckties.

The 33-year-old Sasuke, whose real name is Masanori Murakawa, was quoted in the *Nikkan Sports* newspaper as saying, "This is my face ... I won support from voters with this face, and to take it off would be breaking promises." Sasuke added that he hopes to demonstrate his "superabundant power" outside of wrestling for a change.

Nikkan Sports also quoted an Iwate prefectural official who has a problem with the mask. "There is no law specifically forbidding it. But now that he has won, we must look into the issue."

On Election Day, reporters noted that Sasuke was sporting a cast on his ankle. As it turned out, he hadn't suffered a wrestling injury. He had tripped over a curb while campaigning.

WWE Stockwatch

(For the period of March 1, 2003 to April 15, 2003)

45-Day High: 8.45 on March 3
45-Day Low: 7.43 on April 10
52-Week High: 15.30 on May 7, 2002
52-Week Low: 6.76 on October 16, 2002

The war in Iraq seemed to blunt the effect that WrestleMania XIX had on WWE stock, although the event broke the attendance record at Seattle's Safeco Field, attracting a total of 54,097 people from all 50 states and around the world. The live gate generated more than $2.76-million. More than 10,000 fans attended the three-day Fan Axxess, where superstars had their photos taken with fans, raising over $37,000 for the American Diabetes Association. Axxess also had the corporate support of 1-800-Call-ATT and Snickers Cruncher.

In addition, at the end of the show, it was announced that WrestleMania XX would take place at the site of WrestleManias I and X: Madison Square Garden.

After posting a $16-million third quarter loss, WWE hired Philip Livingston as its new chief financial officer. Livingston is the former CFO for Catalina Marketing Corp. and Celestial Seasonings. Former CFO Augie Ligouri was forced out of WWE last October. It is hoped that Livingston, who recently served as chief executive of an international CFO organization, has the expertise to help WWE rebound.

Again, there is evidence that international expansion might play a role in that effort. More than 30,000 people attended shows in Capetown, Durban, Johannesburg, and East Rand, South Africa. The tour generated nearly $1-million. In addition, there are new television deals for Germany and Japan.

TV breakdown

Week beginning March 3

Raw (TNN): 4.5
Smackdown (UPN): 3.3
Velocity (TNN): 0.8
Confidential (TNN): 0.7
Sunday Night Heat (MTV): 1.0

Analysis: Steve Austin's return to *Raw* was worth half a point to the ratings, a significant but not spectacular increase. But the fans who did tune in were able to see Austin give the stunner to each member of Three-Minute Warning. *Smackdown's* overall rating was affected slightly because in several markets, it was pre-empted by an address from President Bush concerning a possible war in Iraq. *Confidential*, once the most talked-about program in the secondary lineup, is in obvious need of a boost.

Week beginning March 10

Raw (TNN): 4.0
Smackdown (UPN): 3.0
Velocity (TNN): 0.8
Confidential (TNN): 0.7
Sunday Night Heat (MTV): 1.0

Analysis: Vince McMahon had to be disappointed that Steve Austin's return didn't result in more of a long-term boost for *Raw*. It dropped back to pre-Austin levels this week. Surprisingly, the match between *Smackdown* champ Kurt Angle and Brock Lesnar (the night Kurt pulled a switcharoo with brother Eric) didn't result in any tangible ratings increase. Meanwhile, the broadcast team of Josh Matthews and Ernest "The Cat" Miller has failed to provide a ratings increase for *Velocity* that no one expected anyway. *Heat* continued to benefit from its cushy time slot.

Week beginning March 17

Raw (TNN): 3.8
Smackdown (UPN): 2.7
Velocity (TNN): 0.7
Confidential (TNN): 0.7
Sunday Night Heat (MTV): 1.1

Analysis: The Steve Austin-Eric Bischoff feud proved it had little of the magic of the Austin-Vince McMahon feud by leading *Raw's* ratings slide this week. *Smackdown* took a big-time plunge, down to 2.7 because many UPN stations pre-empted the show to provide coverage of the war in Iraq. The 2.7 number was similar to what *Smackdown* draws during holidays. *The Third Degree*, a pre-WrestleMania interview program that aired on TNN, drew 0.7—a solid number for a one-time promotional special.

Week beginning March 24

Raw (TNN): 3.5
Smackdown (UPN): 3.2
Velocity (TNN): 0.7
Confidential (TNN): 0.5
Sunday Night Heat (MTV): 1.1

Analysis: To look at the numbers, one would assume that President Bush had declared war on WWE. *Raw's* rating continued to drop despite going into overtime with a "Rock" concert. Lilian Garcia did sing another stirring rendition of "The Star-Spangled Banner" to show support for U.S. troops. *Smackdown* continued its steady push of John Cena, which is a surprisingly serious one considering his one-dimensional—although very entertaining—rap gimmick. *Confidential's* rating dropped to an all-time low of 0.5.

Week beginning March 31

Raw (TNN): 3.7
Smackdown (UPN): 3.3
Velocity (TNN): 0.6
Confidential (TNN): 0.5
Sunday Night Heat (TNN): 1.0

Analysis: *Raw* drew a very disappointing rating, considering that it had the benefit of WrestleMania XIX the night before, appearances by Steve Austin and The Rock, and the supposedly anticipated debut of Bill Goldberg. Over on *Smackdown*, Vince McMahon renewed his feud with Hulk Hogan, and Sable made her return. Proving that it's all about the time slot, *Velocity* and *Confidential* to struggle even worse than *Excess* had, while *Sunday Night Heat* moved from MTV to TNN while easily maintaining its viewership.

Week beginning April 7

Raw (TNN): 3.5
Smackdown (UPN): 3.2
Velocity (TNN): 0.8
Confidential (TNN): 0.8
Sunday Night Heat (TNN): 1.1

Analysis: Perhaps in small part due to the Syracuse-Kansas NCAA basketball championship game, *Raw* slid down to 3.5. Another confrontation between The Rock and Bill Goldberg, and the return of Kevin Nash didn't offset that kind of competition. S*mackdown's* rating, which seems to be less volatile from one week to another, was largely unchanged, despite a strong first segment with *Smackdown* champion Brock Lesnar vs. cruiserweight champion Matt Hardy, and the return of "Piper's Pit" after a 14-year absence.

EVERY 3 WEEKS

the IWA World Champion wins

$500.00!

Copyright © 2002 Worlds Unlimited, Inc. All Rights Reserved.

Create an imaginary wrestler with this coupon. Send it and $3 for your first 10 matches to:

IWA CHALLENGE
BOX 5275
WILLOWICK, OH 44095

WEAR-DOWN HOLDS

1. Airplane spin
2. Arm drag
3. Arm lock
4. Asian spike
5. Atomic drop
6. Bear hug
7. Bite
8. Body slam
9. Body tackle
10. Bulldog
11. Chicken wing
12. Choke slam
13. Claw
14. Clothesline
15. Cross body block
16. Double axehandle
17. Drop kick
18. Eagle split
19. Elbow smash
20. Eye gouge
21. Face rake
22. Fireman's carry ram
23. Flying body press
24. Flying clothesline
25. Flying drop kick
26. Flying elbow drop
27. Flying head butt
28. Flying mare
29. Forearm smash
30. Foreign object
31. Full nelson
32. Giant swing
33. Grapevine
34. Hair pull
35. Hammer lock
36. Head lock
37. Head stomp
38. Hip roll
39. Irish whip
40. Knee drop
41. Leg lock
42. Leg sweep
43. Manager interference
44. Monkey flip
45. Overhead toss
46. Pole ram
47. Reverse chin lock
48. Rolling scissors
49. Rope burn
50. Russian sickle
51. Savate kick
52. Scissors grip
53. Shoulder breaker
54. Slingshot
55. Snap mare
56. Step-over toe hold
57. Suplex
58. Surfboard
59. Turnbuckle smash
60. Wrist lock

SET-UP HOLDS

61. Abdominal stretch
62. Avalanche
63. Backbreaker
64. Backroll press
65. Belly to belly
66. Big splash
67. Boston crab
68. Brain buster
69. Camel clutch
70. Cobra clutch
71. Cradle
72. Crucifix
73. DDT
74. Figure four
75. Flying leg drop
76. Gourd buster
77. Hurricanrana
78. Moonsault
79. Neckbreaker
80. Piledriver
81. Power bomb
82. Power slam
83. Scorpion deathlock
84. Sleeper
85. Slingshot suplex
86. Spine buster
87. Stunner
88. Sunset flip
89. Superplex
90. Texas cloverleaf

Over 17 years of fantasy wrestling excitement!

_____
YOUR NAME (PRINT NEATLY)

_____
STREET ADDRESS

_____
CITY, STATE, ZIP CODE

_____
WRESTLER'S NAME (DO NOT USE ANY REAL PRO WRESTLER NAMES)

WEAR-DOWN HOLDS: *Choose 10 of the holds at the left numbered 1-60. Only use a hold once.*

1 _____ 2 _____ 3 _____ 4 _____ 5 _____

6 _____ 7 _____ 8 _____ 9 _____ 10 _____

SET-UP HOLDS: *Choose 5 of the holds at the left numbered 61-90. Only use a hold once.*

1 _____ 2 _____ 3 _____ 4 _____ 5 _____

FINISHING HOLD: *Create your own custom final maneuver or choose a hold from our list.*

_____

the steel cage

By Liz Hunter

A FOURTH "I" FOR "INSANITY." Fans and fellow wrestlers were lauding Kurt Angle, praising him for having the guts to defend his WWE Smackdown title against Brock Lesnar at WrestleMania XIX, despite the fact that physicians warned that the two herniated disks pressing against his spinal cord could cause paralysis or even death if he took a bad bump. Angle accepted the WrestleMania match because, depending on the surgery's outcome, it could end up being his last. For that reason, he wanted what could be his final performance to take place on WWE's greatest stage. (The six-figure WrestleMania paycheck he'll be receiving might have had something to do with his decision as well.)

What amazes me is that Angle was fully aware of the risks, but planned on defending against Lesnar anyway. "Wrestling is probably the most dangerous sport there is, and I've been injured in pro wrestling more than in amateur," Angle told the *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*. "We have taken wrestling to such a high level with such high risk and high expectations for the fans. We're doing more fighting, more bouncing around, more acrobatics. We need to go back to the true grit of what pro wrestling was."

Nevertheless, Angle opted for competing at 'Mania, regardless of the consequences. Frankly, I'm not surprised that Angle decided to risk his body one more time. That's what happens when a wrestler spends more time in a locker room than in his family living room.

But after Kurt wears that restrictive neck brace for several months, and he's able to spend more time with his beautiful wife, Karen, and their four-month-old daughter, Kyra, I bet he'll look back at that foolhardy decision to compete at WrestleMania and shake his head in disbelief.

Regardless of how his career and life progress from here, Kurt Angle will someday (probably someday soon) look back on his decision to go through with his match with Brock Lesnar at WrestleMania XIX as a foolhardy one, predicts Liz Hunter.

KEEPING A-BREAST OF TNA. Because NWA-TNA is available only on pay-per-view, and not broadcast or cable-television, I was pretty sure that one of the company's female performers would conveniently lose her top at some point. And that's exactly what happened on March 12, when Glen Gilbertti (formerly known as Disco Inferno) and Holly Wood issued an open challenge to any woman in TNA. To the fans' delight, Lollipop stepped out of her dancing cage and entered the ring to answer the challenge.

As it turned out, the only challenge was how Lollipop was going to keep her top on. She and Holly Wood engaged in an old-fashioned catfight, with half of Lollipop's chest being exposed momentarily, and then Holly Wood tearing it the rest of the way off.

Yet Lollipop didn't go for the quick cover-up. With all her assets dangling, she tore back at Holly Wood until Jeremy Borash finally got into the ring to cover her.

This was far worse than the brief flash Stacy "The Kat" Carter gave at WWE Armageddon in December 1999. I know because I rewound the tape several times just to make sure.

Showcasing a woman in a dancing cage is bad enough, but this brand of sexploitation is abhorrent and demeaning. I condemn TNA for allowing this incident to take place. As a disappointed former admirer, I have this personal message for Jerry Jarrett: You ought to be ashamed of yourself.

AND WE SAID IT WOULDN'T LAST. We're very proud of the expanded WrestleMania XIX coverage found in this issue, but our editors were quite critical of WrestleMania's maiden voyage nearly two decades ago. The August 1985 issue of *Inside Wres-*

We're not ashamed to admit that *PWI* wasn't sold on the WrestleMania as the Super Bowl of wrestling concept after watching the flamboyant Liberace and other celebrities threaten to overshadow the wrestlers on the first one. Perhaps we were too critical too soon.

tling included a special analysis of the event in a feature titled "WrestleMania! Why It Succeeded ... Why It Failed."

While we credited WrestleMania I for having solid matches, garnering mainstream attention for wrestling as a whole, and taking the concept of closed-circuit television to a higher level, we alleged that too many celebrities were involved and stated that Hulk Hogan directly embarrassed the entire sport when he injured talk show host Richard Belzer with a front facelock during the pre-'Mania publicity tour.

Here's an excerpt from our critique, which gives you an idea of how slowly we warmed up to Vince McMahon's "sports entertainment" vision:

Throughout the promotion of the WrestleMania card, the WWF tried to present itself to the mainstream media as the singlemost influential and important promoter of wrestling in the world. That is simply not the case. The NWA, for example, is the oldest and largest governing body in professional wrestling today, while the World Class area wrestling program covers nearly as many television markets as the WWF. Many wrestling fans were turned off by the WWF's arrogant promotion of itself as they were turned off by the WrestleMania involvement of Mr. T, Cyndi Lauper, Liberace, Muhammad Ali, and Billy Martin.

How dare the WWF promote itself as superior to World Class! How dare the WWF put Liberace in such an important capacity as timekeeper! Oh, the outrage!

Just imagine what we would have written about necrophilia angles back in 1985. □

strange list of the month

FIVE WRESTLEMANIA CELEBRITIES WE'D LIKE TO FORGET

1. Herb, nerd spokesman for Burger King
2. Susan St. James, star of TV's *Kate & Allie*
3. Ozzy Osbourne, heavy metal singer and future reality series buffoon
4. Cy Sperling, founder of The Hair Club for Men
5. Jonathan Taylor Thomas, child star of *Home Improvement*

A LOT TO DIGEST!

We hope you have a lot of time on your hands. Because it's going to take you a while to read through these 132-page, digest-sized issues! *The Wrestler Digest* and *Inside Wrestling Digest* contain more than 30 stories in each issue, all culled from the previous three months worth of articles in your favorite magazines, *Pro Wrestling Illustrated, The Wrestler, Inside Wrestling, Wrestle America,* and *Wrestling Superstars.*

Now back issues of *The Wrestler Digest* and *Inside Wrestling Digest* are available in limited quantities. Order today!

Please send me the back issues I have checked off below. I have enclosed a $5 check or money order for each issue as payment in full.

Wrestler Digest	Inside Wrestling Digest
☐ Winter 1997	☐ Spring 1998
☐ Spring 1998	☐ Winter 1998
☐ Fall 1998	☐ Spring 1999
☐ Summer 1999	☐ Fall 1999
☐ Winter 1999	☐ Fall 2000
☐ Summer 2000	

ONLY $5 EACH

Send To:
LONDON PUBLISHING CO.
P.O. BOX 910
FT. WASHINGTON, PA 19034

Name _____
Address _____
City _____
State _____ **Zip** _____

For all orders outside the U.S., you must add $1.50 for every back issue to be sent via surface mail, and $3.00 for every back issue to be sent airmail. Int'l money order in U.S. funds only. Please allow 6-8 weeks for delivery. 5342/08-00/4c

win, lose, or draw

By Harry Burkett

WHEN DOUG DELICIOUS defeated Buff Bagwell on March 12 at a Maryland Championship Wrestling show near Baltimore, most of the fans in the crowd reacted with stunned amazement. After all, Delicious was never expected to upset "Buff Daddy." While both men are arrogant and boast impressive physiques, a key difference is that Bagwell is a former WCW superstar, while Delicious hasn't even placed in the *"PWI* 500" in recent years.

If this match had occurred at a Championship Pro Wrestling event in Keyser, West Virginia, where Delicious is very popular and has wrestled considerably longer, he might have been the odds-on favorite. But it's not surprising that a fine talent like Delicious, who has been competing for the better part of nine years, can be so easily overlooked. In fact, the rural Maryland-West Virginia-Virginia circuit boasts many wrestlers with a vast array of talents. Many of them work full-time jobs while pursuing their dreams of being pro wrestlers and, as a result, never get on the fast track to WWE. Much of the problem is due to underexposure.

Photos by Timothy A. Walker

Doug Delicious' victory over Buff Bagwell on a Maryland Championship Wrestling show sure looked like a huge upset. After all, a relative nobody beat a former WCW star. But Delicious, like a lot of low-profile indy wrestlers, isn't a nobody. As Harry Burkett has learned, most of them have an interesting story to tell.

For more than a decade, photographer Tim Walker has done his best to focus his camera lens on these regional stars. Thanks to the photographs he contributes to *PWI,* this underappreciated talent is exposed for the world to see.

"When it comes to indy wrestling, you just never know what to expect, and I guess that is part of the charm," said Walker. "Where else would I have seen John Rambo's head get caught between the ring apron and a steel cage? Where else would I have met a legend like Ivan Koloff, who would insist that I call him 'Uncle Ivan'? It reminds me of the shows I went to with my dad, and the hours we spent together talking about wrestling. If you buy a ringside ticket, you are so close to the ring that you can actually reach out and touch the ring apron. You can actually see the sweat and blood on the canvas and the bruises, welts, cuts, and ring rash on the wrestlers."

Delicious, despite his supermodel mystique, comes from that environment. Long before the 6'1", 235-pounder began strutting his stuff on the catwalk, he was sacrificing his time, money, and body simply because of his love for the business. That's why his win over Bagwell meant so much.

"In the early days, I drove all the way to North Carolina and they gave me a case of Coke as a payoff," he recalled. "I've always had a flair for entertaining, even back when I played football at Glenville State College in West Virginia. My father

often took me to wrestling shows, including WrestleMania I on closed-circuit TV. So it didn't surprise him that I became a pro wrestler. My dad died recently, and I wish he'd been able to see me beat Buff in front of more than 1,000 people."

One of Delicious' most persistent rivals is Brock Singleton. At 6'3" and 265 pounds, Singleton has the size and power advantage over most of his opponents. "It's always great for me to get in the ring and test someone who is as big as Brock," said Delicious. "The amazing thing about him is that he is so very strong."

In addition to his size and power, Singleton has an impressive amateur background. He began wrestling for his high school in Pittsburgh, and continued while attending West Point, earning two New York State titles there. He also qualified for the NCAA Division I tournament in his junior year, and *Amateur Wrestling News* ranked him 10th in the U.S. in his senior year. One of his most memorable experiences was his opportunity to drill with Kurt Angle in the summer of 1990.

"He had just won his first NCAA title and was coming off knee surgery," remembered Singleton. "I was a high school senior attending wrestling camp at Clarion University. One afternoon, I got to drill with him for about an hour. It was a mismatch from the start. I was only 17 years old going against an NCAA All-American. I gave it my best, but he pretty much manhandled me, even though he had only one good leg.

"He had unnatural speed and power. Angle was a light heavyweight who took on guys 50 pounds heavier than him. He had flawless technique and incredible endurance brought about by a rock-solid work ethic."

Although he is a regular on the West Virginia independent scene and might be written off as just some hillbilly by someone who knows nothing about him, Brock Singleton (shown against Delicious) is really quite the athlete. He even has a personal tale to tell about Kurt Angle.

Singleton went on to serve as an infantry officer in the U.S. Army and, after a tour of South Korea, conducted memorial services for America's fallen heroes at Arlington National Cemetery. He began his pro wrestling career in KYDA Pro Wrestling in 2000 and, accompanied by the lovely and talented Sasha, has become a regular on the Maryland-West Virginia-Virginia circuit. Like Delicious, Singleton is trying to gain wider exposure in MCW and hopes to compete in front of a national audience someday.

John "The Paisan" Balsamo is another indy wrestler with solid amateur experience whom I've had the pleasure of watching. As a high school senior, Balsamo placed fifth in the New Jersey State championships. He asked veteran Ray Apollo about how to begin a pro wrestling career, and he was referred to Samoan Afa in Hazleton, Pennsylvania. Since that time, Balsamo has gained a reputation as a shooter.

"Although he is a cruiserweight, I have seen him take on and beat people twice his size," noted Singleton. "Even though he is technically sound, his mouth can be quite a distraction. This often causes people to make mistakes out of anger, which he is always quick to take advantage of."

At only 5'8" and 180 pounds, Balsamo gained some fame as the result of an impromptu contest with Samu, formerly of The Headshrinkers. Following a World Xtreme Wrestling banquet, Samu joked that he could keep pace with Balsamo in a shoot match. Balsamo caught Samu in a front headlock, fell on top, and took him down to the floor. Samu couldn't escape. Samu's wife began screaming, and Balsamo wondered what would be in store when the big Samoan got back to his feet.

Instead of attacking Balsamo, Samu smiled and remarked, "You're just a little bulldog, aren't you?"

Balsamo, who holds the CPW tag team title with Gino Sarentino, is also a regular in Maryland's National Wrestling League and several other indies throughout the Northeast. "I am fortunate to receive continual work," said Balsamo. "Whether I ever wrestle for a national company, or just have to remain satisfied with a couple of kids recognizing me at the local Blockbuster, it doesn't matter. I just enjoy showing my skills and entertaining the fans, and I'm willing to do that anywhere."

That's the attitude of most indy wrestlers I meet, whether they're in Keyser, West Virginia, or South Philadelphia. I bet you'll start looking a little closer at Tim Walker's photographs now that you know what you've been missing. □

the straight shooter

By Dan Murphy

I WONDER IF former NWA World champion Ron Garvin sat back and watched WrestleMania XIX on TV somewhere. If he did, I'm sure he could relate to some of the current WWE stars who could only sit back and watch the pay-per-view as well, those who fell victim to the WrestleMania snub.

Garvin, you see, was an unlikely NWA champion, famed for his "hands of stone" knockout punch and his blue-collar, never-say-die work ethic. The polar opposite of the flamboyant "Nature Boy" Ric Flair, Garvin was a main-event player in the NWA. After he dropped the World title back to Flair at Starrcade 1987, Garvin left the promotion that made him a star and later signed with the WWF.

In the late-1980s, promotional jumps by championship-caliber wrestlers were fairly rare. Some observers viewed the loss of Garvin to the WWF as a major blow to the NWA. Garvin feuded with the likes of Greg Valentine, Earthquake, and Hercules, but when WrestleMania rolled around, Garvin was sitting on the couch at home.

Barely two years after headlining Starrcade, Garvin couldn't even get an opening match slot on the WWF's biggest card of the year. I'm sure he had some theories on what it meant. That the WWF either signed him just so the NWA would lose a draw, or they made an example of him by making it look like a former NWA champion couldn't win a key match in the WWF. They used him mainly to make everyone around him look better.

This year's WrestleMania had more high-profile snubs than any previous 'Mania. Rest assured that at least some of the folks who didn't get a spot at WrestleMania XIX were left off the card on purpose, just as I'm sure Garvin was. Here's what the WrestleMania card position—or lack thereof—meant to some of WWE's biggest names.

ROB VAN DAM

WrestleMania Position: WWE Raw tag title match on *Sunday Night Heat*

RVD *still* has the potential to be the biggest star in WWE. In fact, he was headlining Raw cards only a few months before WrestleMania. Somewhere along the way, Van Dam must have made too many enemies backstage. Several wrestlers complained that RVD was an unsafe or sloppy worker. Or maybe some of those in power thought Van Dam walked in with a big head and didn't kiss the posteriors of the right people from day one.

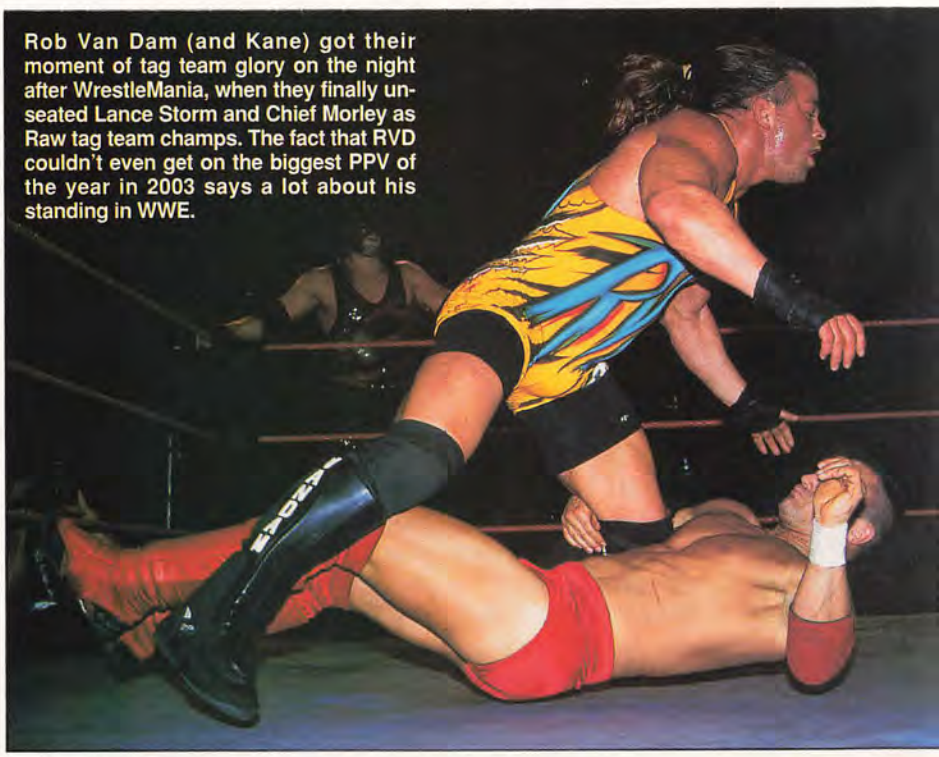
That means, regardless of talent and charisma, Van Dam was pinned by Lance Storm in a match that took place before the PPV broadcast began.

What The Snub Means: The night after 'Mania, Van Dam and Kane finally won the tag title. Sorry, but that's a bad thing. That shows that WWE is content to allow Van Dam to waste away his potential in tag matches rather than making a move back to singles contention. Has Van Dam gotten complacent, or has he just accepted his fate and his role in WWE? Either way, it appears he is never going to be much more than an afterthought in the Raw title picture, and that's the company's loss as much as it is his.

SCOTT STEINER

WrestleMania Position: No match

How the mighty have fallen! Barely



Rob Van Dam (and Kane) got their moment of tag team glory on the night after WrestleMania, when they finally unseated Lance Storm and Chief Morley as Raw tag team champs. The fact that RVD couldn't even get on the biggest PPV of the year in 2003 says a lot about his standing in WWE.

two months after "Big Poppa Pump" headlined the Royal Rumble in a title match against Triple-H (and a month after he battled "The Game" in a Raw title rematch at No Way Out), Steiner was nowhere to be found at the biggest show of the year.

Steiner was condemned for wrestling a dog of a match against HHH at the Rumble, but he's not the only one to blame for that snorefest. Hunter hasn't been the same since his quadriceps muscle virtually exploded on him two years ago. Even on his best nights, Hunter is plodding. Steiner had a case of ring rust that was building for nearly two years, and injuries to his foot, legs, and back must still be affecting him. The matchmakers virtually assured that match was going to be a train wreck from the get-go, and Steiner was made the scapegoat.

What The Snub Means: Now that Goldberg's in the fold, Steiner is pushed even further down the ladder of contention. If BPP makes a heel turn, he might get another chance. Otherwise, expect to see him go the way of Ron Garvin—losing matches to make other wrestlers look better.

Let's see, Hurricane was good enough to pin The Rock in the center of the ring on *Raw* a few weeks before WrestleMania and good enough to have a competitive match with Triple-H on *Raw* the night after 'Mania, but he couldn't get a second of face time on the PPV? Seems like a snub if there ever was one.

JEFF HARDY

WrestleMania Position: No match

Compare Jeff to his brother, Matt. Matt and Rey Misterio Jr. put on one of the best matches of the card, while Jeff never got a second of face time. What's especially surprising is that Jeff didn't even second Trish Stratus for her match, given the ongoing drama between the two.

What The Snub Means: Jeff's career is on the ropes. The fans love him, but Hardy has lost some of his passion and drive. It's like his thrilling Intercontinental title upset of HHH never happened. Considering both Hardys are promoting their new autobiography, it's unbelievable that WWE didn't back Jeff at 'Mania. It also doesn't augur well for his future with the company.

THE HURRICANE

WrestleMania Position: No match

Just two weeks before WrestleMania, Hurricane scored the upset of his life by pinning The Rock live on *Raw*. That momentum was almost completely snuffed out by the time WrestleMania rolled around. If WWE had eliminated the ridiculous Miller Lite Catfight Girls segments, it could have added, say, an interbrand cruiserweight battle royal featuring Hurricane, Jamie Noble, Shannon Moore, Maven, Nunzio, Brian Kendrick, and Jeff Hardy. Instead, some of the most exciting and innovative talent in the promotion was overlooked.

What The Snub Means: It means WWE still isn't committed to the cruiserweight division (notice that the cruiserweight title match was the opening bout and was given less than five minutes). And it means that Hurricane will never be more than a goofy sidekick or a comic foil.

There were plenty of other big snubs. Kane. Al Snow. Rikishi. Tommy Dreamer. Test. Christian. Jamal and Rosey. The list goes on and on. And for those WWE competitors who had to watch WrestleMania unfold on a monitor backstage—or on the couch at home—here's a little career advice:

Take a few minutes to update your resume. Your time in WWE could be limited.

Just ask Ron Garvin. □

MOVING?

If so, please give us 8 weeks advance notice so we can continue to service your subscription promptly. Check the magazine(s) listed below you subscribe to:

- ☐ PRO WRESTLING ILLUSTRATED
- ☐ THE WRESTLER
- ☐ INSIDE WRESTLING

NAME

OLD ADDRESS

CITY

STATE ZIP

NEW ADDRESS

CITY

STATE ZIP

EFFECTIVE DATE

CLIP THIS FORM AND SEND TO:

LONDON PUBLISHING CO.
P.O. BOX 2029, DEPT. 9
MARION, OH 43302

5423/01-03

BACK ISSUES OF THE Wrestler

Don't miss a single issue of the magazine that has thrilled wrestling fans for two generations, THE WRESTLER! Complete your collection of the most respected wrestling publication in the world! Supplies are limited, so don't delay—order today!

May 1979: Paul Jones-Rick Steamboat Feud: Who Is Really To Blame? Also: Valiants, Jack Brisco, Larry Hennig, Johnson-King, Lanza-Mulligan, Chief Jay Strongbow, Snuka-Patera.

April 1980: Did Ken Patera Destroy Dusty Rhodes' Bionic Elbow? Also: Terry Funk, Kevin Von Erich, Di-Biase-Backlund, Bockwinkel & Heenan, Baba-Race, Mr. Wrestling II, Youngblood & Steamboat.

Aug. 1980: The Reign Of Bloodshed Begins: Stevens & Valentine Win The NWA Tag Team Title! Also: Kerry Von Erich, Backlund & Skaaland, Nick Bockwinkel, Zbyszko-Bruno, Kern-Muraco, Samoans, Wrestling II-Idol.

June 1981: Bruno Sammartino: "I Want To Break Stan Hansen's Neck!" Also: Ted DiBiase, Garea & Martel, Mike Graham, Mongolian Stomper, Piper-Superstar, Verne Gagne, Tommy Rich.

Sept. 1980: Why Ernie Ladd Says ... "I'm Tired Of Being Your King." Also: Rick Steamboat, Mad Dog Vachon, Bugsy McGraw, Patera-Patterson, Manny Fernandez, Bob Backlund, Greg Gagne, Mike Sharpe.

Feb. 1981: Larry Zbyszko's Claim: "Tony Garea Begged Me Not To Hurt Him!" Also: The Grappler, Race-Patera, Hussein Arab, Humperdink-Rhodes, Gilberts, Mr. Wrestling II, Bravo-Bockwinkel.

Oct. 1981: Is The Funk Family At War? Why Terry Funk And Dory Funk Jr. Were Forced To Wrestle. Also: Backlund-Patterson-Mosca, Harley Race, Rhodes-Khan, Kevin Sullivan, Flair-Patera, Verne Gagne.

Jan. 1982: Rich vs. Masked Superstar: Can Tommy Rich Survive As Georgia's Last Hero? Also: Kiwis, Bockwinkel-Atlas, Mascaras-Steamboat, Sullivan-Taylor, Bruno Sammartino.

Aug. 1982: Nick Bockwinkel: "Tommy Rich Is Too Stupid To Be Champion!" Also: Putski-Adonis, Blackjack Mulligan Jr., Roddy Piper, Rick Steamboat, Lawler-Kaufman, Mike Graham.

April 1982: How Jack Brisco Controls Ric Flair's Championship Destiny. Also: Tito Santana, Valentine-Atlas, Bob Roop, Armstrongs, John Studd, Eric Embry.

May 1982: Bob Backlund's Fourth Anniversary As WWF Champion: The All-American Boy Grows Up. Also: Koloff-Rich, Superstar Graham, David Von Erich, Putski-Morales, Dusty Rhodes.

June 1982: Ric Flair vs. Rick Steamboat: How The NWA Belt Strangled Wrestling's Greatest Friendship. Also: Piper-Armstrong, Hussein Arab, Bruno Sammartino, Adonis & Ventura, Butch Reed.

July 1982: Harley Race—His Destiny Is In The Hands Of Tommy Rich. Also: Rick Steamboat, Chief Jay Strongbow, Buzz Sawyer, Ric Flair, Roddy Piper.

Sept. 1982: Dusty Rhodes Returns To Florida: The Tragic Comeback That Should Not Have Happened. Also: Manny Fernandez, Armstrong-Piper, Blassie-Mulligan, Japan, Bockwinkel-Hogan.

Nov. 1982: Clash Of The Titans—Backlund vs. Flair: Who's Better? Also: Roddy Piper, Gagne & Brunzell, Putski & Snuka, Brian Blair.

Dec. 1982: Morales vs. Snuka: Does Pedro Deserve To Be Intercontinental Champion? Also: Bob Orton Jr., Kamala, Rich & Rhodes, Barry Windham, Ted DiBiase, JYD-Bockwinkel, Oliver Humperdink.

Jan. 1983: Ivan Putski Humiliates Cowboy Bob Orton: Can The Grand Wizard Pick Up The Pieces? Also: Barry Windham, Muraco-Sawyer-Rich, Nick Bockwinkel, Flair-Youngblood-Steamboat, Fabulous Kangaroos.

Feb. 1983: Exclusive Coverage: Nick Bockwinkel Regains The AWA Title From Otto Wanz. Also: Backlund-Graham, Rich-Sawyer, Barry Windham, Martel & Garea, McDaniel & Piper, Kamala.

May 1983: What Will Happen When The Samoans Become Too Smart For Capt. Lou Albano? Also: Tommy Rich, Terry Allen, Eddie Gilbert, Kerry-Race, Ladd & Rhodes, Flair-Orndorff.

June 1983: Flair-Windham Match Spurs Controversy: Should The NWA Champion Be Allowed To Choose His Challengers? Also: Ivan Koloff, Bruiser Brody, Kerry Von Erich, Andre-Kamala, Brazil-Valentine, Gagnes-Martel.

July 1983: Ric Flair: "I Wrestle The Men Backlund Is Afraid Of." Also: Putski-Adonis, Kevin Sullivan, Bob Roop, Martel-Heenan.

Sept. 1983: Nick Bockwinkel Forces Hulk Hogan Into Exile: And Only The Fans Can Bring Him Back. Also: Briscos, Blackwell-Kerry-Race, Paul Ellering, Mulligan & Windham.

Nov. 1983: Target—Harley Race! Can Dusty Rhodes Fulfill His American Dream A Third Time? Also: Rick Rude, Rotundo-Kabuki, Gagne & Brunzell, Tito Santana, Von Erichs-Freebirds.

Dec. 1983: The Night The AWA World Title Was Stolen From Mil Mascaras. Also: Roddy Piper, Larry Zbyszko, Dino Bravo, Fabulous Ones, Garvin & Sunshine.

March 1984: Is Tito Santana Trying To Blackmail The WWF? Also: Wayne & Sawyer, Hogan-Race, David Von Erich, Jesse Ventura.

July 1984: Tommy Rich Is Back! And He Owes It All To The Fans. Also: Valiant-Rhodes, Ric Flair, Mike Von Erich, Billy Jack.

Aug. 1984: Garvin vs. Roberts: "Hands Of Stone" Crushes "The Snake." Also: Freebirds-Devastation Inc., Sawyer-Sullivan, Lawler & Dillon, McDaniel-Race.

Nov. 1984: The $50,000 Full-Nelson Challenge Match: Billy Jack Gets Bloody Revenge Against Superstar Graham. Also: Roddy Piper, Heenan & Saito, Brody & Hansen, Kerry Von Erich.

Dec. 1984: The Tully Blanchard-Rick Steamboat Feud: Will Dusty Rhodes End It ... Or Make It Worse? Also: Tito Santana, Martel-Atlas, D. Funk, Mike Von Erich, Williams-Taylor.

Jan. 1985: Kerry Von Erich: "I've Got Ric Flair's NWA Title Within My Grasp." Also: Albano & Lauper, Koloffs & Kernodle, Road Warriors, Lawler & Rude, Scott McGhee.

Feb. 1985: Greg Valentine Wins Tito Santana's Intercontinental Title ... But Does He Deserve To Be Champion? Also: Ronnie Garvin, Warriors-Sheepherders, Flair-Billy Jack, Nikita Koloff.

April 1985: Six-Man Riot! Road Warriors & Ellering vs. Rhodes, Rich, & Anderson. Also: Tonga Kid, tomorrow's stars, Adams-Kevin, Flair-Jack, Terminators.

May 1985: The Road Warriors vs. Dusty Rhodes & Manny Fernandez: Exclusive Coverage Of The Historic Tag Team Superbowl! Also: Al-Kaissie-Gagne, Backlund-Race, Haynes-Kamala, Tito Santana.

June 1985: Are The WWF Rulebreakers Singling Out Barry Windham For Destruction? Also: Zbyszko-Backlund, Rhodes-Blanchard, Tommy Rich, Oliver-Haynes.

July 1985: It's A Dog's Life ... And Junkyard Dog Wouldn't Trade It With Anyone! Also: Backlund-Martel, Kernodle-Koloff, Butch Reed, Hernandez & Sunshine, Mike Graham.

Aug. 1985: Ten Days Of Blood And Glory: The Road Warriors Invade Japan! Also: Terry Taylor, Magnum T.A., Bugsy McGraw, Sheik & Volkoff-Windham & Rotundo, 20th anniversary.

Oct. 1985: David Shultz Gets An NWA Title Shot: Ric Flair—"I Wrestle The Men Hulk Hogan Is Afraid Of!" Also: Misty Blue, Rick Martel, Kendall Windham, George Steele, Killer Brooks, all-time top 10.

May 1986: Von Erich Family Feud: Is Lance Coming Between Kevin And Kerry? Also: Hansen-Hall, Hillbillies-Beefcake & Valentine, Butch Reed, Santana-Ventura.

June 1986: Kerry Reveals His Secret: "I've Told Magnum T.A. How To Beat Ric Flair!" Also: Steve Williams, Hogan-Orton, Flair-Bockwinkel, Lex Luger.

Nov. 1986: Morton & Gibson Take A Trip To Badstreet U.S.A.: The Rock 'n' Roll Express vs. The Freebirds. Also: Eddie Gilbert, Hogan-Orndorff, Mike Von Erich, Mulligan-Bass.

Dec. 1986: Ric Flair's NWA Title Reign: Last Chance To Silence The Critics! Also: Nikita Koloff, Gilbert & Sting, Hogan-Piper, Abdullah-Adams, Nick Bockwinkel.

Jan. 1987: Bobby Heenan's Bitter Crusade To Destroy Hulk Hogan. Also: Borne & Sawyer, Garvins, Ted DiBiase, Misty Blue Simmes.

Feb. 1987: Tragedy Strikes Wrestling: Magnum T.A. Needs Your Prayers Now More Than Ever. Also: Roberts-Steamboat, Crusher Yurkof, Terry Gordy, Wendell Cooley.

March 1987: Ivan & Khrushchev's Kremlin Orders: Crush Nikita Koloff's Russian Revolution! Also: Barry Windham, One Man Gang, Brian Adias, Savage-Steamboat, Jimmy Snuka.

June 1987: The Hart Foundation vs. The Can-Ams: Special Analysis Of This WWF Superfeud! Also: Nick Bockwinkel, Paul Orndorff, Rhodes & Murdoch, Steve Williams.

July 1987: Missy Hyatt: Will She Kiss And Tell In The WWF? Also: Chris Adams, Hart Foundation, Luger & Horsemen, Nikita-Cornette, Stan Hansen.

Sept. 1987: Independence Day! Also: Hennig-Bockwinkel, Hart Foundation, Koloffs, Bubba Rogers, Missy Hyatt.

Oct. 1987: The Honky Tonk Man Wins The Intercontinental Title: Is Randy Savage The Fans' Last Hope. Also: Kerry Von Erich, Ken Patera, Sting-Gilbert, Horsemen-Freebirds, Zbyszko-Gagne.

Dec. 1987: Hulk Hogan: Will He Be Drowned By The New Wave Of Challengers? Also: Hennig-Lawler, Windham-Steiner, Flair-Williams, Brutus Beefcake, Ronnie Garvin.

Jan. 1988: The Experts Agree: The Road Warriors Will Turn Bad In 1988! Also: Koloff-Taylor, Curt Hennig, Duggan-DiBiase.

Feb. 1988: Ric Flair Admits: "I'm Nothing Without The NWA Belt!" Also: Kerry Von Erich, Jim Cornette, Hogan-Andre, Hennig-Lawler, Terry Taylor.

March 1988: After Four Years As Champion ... Only Hulk Hogan Can Beat Hulk Hogan. Also: Warriors-Demolition, Steve Williams, Luger & Dillon, Calgary, Terry Gordy.

May 1988: Belt Or No Belt ... Hulk Hogan Is Still The People's Champion! Also: Owen Hart, Tatum & Victory, Scott Hall, Madusa Miceli, Luger-Arn.

June 1988: How Sting's War With Ric Flair Could Make Him A Horseman! Also: Bobby Heenan, Martel-Zenk, Kerry-Gordy, Ted DiBiase, Nikita Koloff.

Aug. 1988: World Tag Title Power Shift! Also: Windham & Luger, Demolition, Taylor-Freebirds, Paul Ellering, Owen & Bret.

Oct. 1988: The Fantastics Declare: "We Will Not Share Our Fans With The Rock 'n' Roll Express!" Also: Rhodes-Windham, Curt Hennig, Roberts-Rude, Rougeaus, Jim Garvin.

Jan. 1989: The Horsemen Destroyed! The World Title Gained! But The Midnight Express Must Still Prove Themselves! Also: Top Guns, Hart & Rougeaus, Andre-Savage-Hulk, Terry Gordy, Kevin Von Erich.

March 1989: Scared Stiff! "Don't Say Snake!" Also: Jeff Jarrett, Cactus Jack, Ric Flair, Bam Bam Bigelow, Hercules, Iron Sheik.

April 1989: Hulkamania Runs Wild Again! Can Randy Savage Stop The Onslaught? Also: British Bulldogs, Road Warriors-Sting & Luger, Lawler-Kerry, Andre, Mike Rotundo.

June 1989: Ultimate Warrior's Mission Impossible: Destroy Randy Savage For Hulk Hogan. Also: Rick Steamboat, Rick Martel, Larry Zbyszko, Luger-Windham by Sting, Ric Flair.

July 1989: Dino Bravo: The Man Hulk Hogan Cannot Beat! Also: Flair-Steamboat, Rhodes & Perez, Road Warriors & Ellering, Michael Hayes.

Aug. 1989 (Special Issue): Supercard Sunday! Exclusive Coverage Of WrestleMania V And Clash Of Champions VI. Also: Kerry-Embry, Randy Savage, Great Muta, Ted DiBiase, Teddy Long.

Sept. 1989: Our Urgent Plea To Ric Flair: Don't Wrestle Terry Funk. Also: Demolition, Roddy Piper, Hogan-Zeus, Larry Zbyszko, Jerry Lawler.

Oct. 1989: No Holds Barred! Hogan & Beefcake vs. Savage & Zeus: An Exclusive Preview & Analysis. Also: Eric Embry, Four Horsemen, Teddy Long, Hayes-Luger, Art Barr, Billy Jack Haynes.

Nov. 1989: Roddy Piper Pins Randy Savage ... And Hulk Hogan Is Scared Stiff! Also: Mr. T & Von Erichs, Garvin & Hayes, Flair-T. Funk, Dustin-Steel Man, Sgt. Slaughter.

Jan. 1990: The Hulk Hogan Book Of Lists. Also: Brian Pillman, Rich-Luger, Tully & Arn, P.Y. Chu-Hi, Greg Gagne.

March 1990: Funk-Flair: "I Quit!—One War Ends, Two More Begin. Also: Nikita Koloff, Survivor Series, Steiners, Hogan-Zeus, Jim Cornette.

April 1990: Hulk Hogan: A Decade Of Greatness. Also: Luger-Flair, Woman, Piper-Heenan, Billy Travis, Badd Company.

July 1990: My 10 Challenges To Ric Flair, By Lex Luger. Also: Lanny Poffo, Dusty-Savage, Luger-Flair, Doom, Tully Blanchard.

Aug. 1990: Hogan-Warrior II: You Can Make It Happen. Also: Eric Embry, Demolition, Doom, Larry Zbyszko.

Sept. 1990: The Ultimate Warrior Wimps Out! Why He Won't Wrestle Hulk Hogan. Also: Billy Jack Haynes, Lex Luger, Doom-Steiners, Tugboat, Kerry-Borne.

Oct. 1990: Hulk Hogan vs. Earthquake: Exclusive SummerSlam Preview & Analysis. Also: Ultimate Warrior, Ric Flair, Tommy Rich, Tasmanian Devil, Chris Von Erich.

Feb. 1991: The Incredible "Halloween Havoc Hoax"! Unraveling The Diabolical Plot. Also: Muta-Steamboat, Hogan-Hart, Ultimate Warrior, Cornette & Express, Norman.

March 1991: Warning To The Ultimate Warrior: Roddy Piper Wants You! Also: Gilbert-Jarrett, Cornette & Express, Teddy Long, Survivor Series, Scott Norton.

April 1991: Hulk Hogan: The Challenges That Remain. Also: Ted DiBiase, Skyscrapers, Lex Luger, Tom Zenk, Fabulous Ones.

May 1991: Only Hulk Hogan Can Rid The WWF Of The Stench Of Sgt. Slaughter. Also: Ric Flair, Bobby Eaton, Sheik-Brazil, Power & Glory, Terry Funk.

June 1991: How Much Longer Can We Depend On Hulk Hogan? Also: Nasty Boys, Sting, Flair-Gigante, Cactus Jack, Kevin Von Erich.

July 1991: Can Ric Flair Shatter The "Myth" Of Japanese Superiority? Also: Embry & Prichard, LOD-Nastys, Steiners, Savage & Elizabeth.

Aug. 1991: If Sgt. Slaughter Said "I'm Sorry" ... Would Hulk And The World Forgive Him? Also: Luger-Nikita, Hennig-Davey Boy, Lanny Poffo, Bam Bam Bigelow.

Nov. 1991: Lex Luger Wins The Title—But Loses His Fans. Also: Rick Steamboat, Roddy Piper, Global, Diamond Studd, Lawler-Embry.

Dec. 1991: Roddy Piper's Exclusive Analysis: Flair vs. Hogan—Who Will Win The Match Of The Century? Also: Sting, 25 greatest teams, Beverly, Cactus Jack.

Jan. 1992: The LOD's Championship Catastrophe: Overpowered By The Natural Disasters. Also: Johnny B. Badd, Mr. Hughes, Jake Roberts, Ronnie Gossett.

Feb. 1992: Shocking WWF Report: McMahon Offers Bounty On Flair—Will Vince Pay The Piper? Also: Ron Simmons, Tito Santana, Bob Backlund, R. Steiner-Abdullah.

March 1992: After Survivor Series & Tuesday In Texas: Has The WWF Title Suffered Irreparable Damage? Also: Brian Pillman, Anderson & Brooser, Rude-Sting, Mountie-Hart, Jeff Jarrett.

April 1992: After A Year Of Tragedy & Turmoil: The Magic Is Back In WCW! Also: Chris Candido, Paul Orndorff, Lady X, Paul Bearer, Hennig & Flair, Michaels & Jannetty.

Dec. 1992: He's *Baaaaaack!* Jake Roberts Slithers Into WCW. Also: Paul E. Dangerously, Ron Simmons, Hulk Hogan, Michaels-Martel, Gilberts-Rock 'n' Rolls.

May 1992: He Rumbled Past 29 Men ... Ric Flair's Hour Of Power: Can One Man Stop Him At WrestleMania VIII? Also: Anderson & Eaton, Roddy Piper, Dusty Rhodes, USWA, Don Owen.

June 1992: In Ric Flair's High-Stakes Championship Game, Hulk Hogan & Sid Justice Are Mere Pawns. Also: Eddie Gilbert, Ultimate Warrior, Vinnie Vegas, WCW titles, Koko B. Ware.

July 1992: "Number Two Just Won't Do": For Rick Rude, The U.S. Belt Means Failure. Also: Madusa, Gorilla Monsoon, LOD, Nurse Vanessa, Greg Valentine, Sabu.

Aug. 1992: The Ultimate Warrior: WrestleMania's Accidental Hero. Also: Bunkhouse matches, Undertaker-Roberts, Sting, JYD, Rob Van Dam.

Sept. 1992: Hey, Legion Of Doom—Go For The Title Or Go Away! Also: Repo-Crush, Mondo Kleen, Freebirds-Valentine & Taylor, Dangerous Alliance, Moondogs.

Oct. 1992: British Bulldog & Ultimate Warrior: Why They'll Be Crowned At SummerSlam. Also: Scotty Flamingo, Brian Lee, Martel-Tatanka, Steve Austin, Sting.

Nov. 1992: WWF Beware! It's The Perfect Time For A Curt Hennig Comeback! Also: Crush, Butch Reed, Sting, Buddy Rogers, Dan Spivey.

Jan. 1993: Sting Turns Sadistic: "Hurting Jake Makes Me Happy!" Also: Anderson & Eaton, Bushwhackers-Moondogs, Ramon-Savage, Natural Disasters, Masa Chono.

Feb. 1993: WWF Champion Bret Hart: His Five Most Dangerous Challenges. Also: Sgt. Slaughter, Steve Austin, Rick Steiner, Bob Backlund, Terry Taylor.

March 1993 (Special Edition): 1992—The Year In Pictures. Also: Madusa-Paul E., Curt Hennig, Davey Boy Smith, Jesse Ventura, Predictions For '93.

April 1993 What's In? What's Out? Also: Razor Ramon, Rick Steamboat, Patriot, Tatanka, Brian Christopher.

May 1993: Sumo Sadism: Will Yokozuna Make His Biggest Splash At WrestleMania? Also: Jim Cornette, Christopher-Jarrett, Benoit-Scorpio, Windham & Rhodes, Hennig-Luger.

Nov. 1993: Bret Hart vs. Lex Luger: It's Not Over Yet! Also: Rude-Dustin, Hulk Hogan, Marty Jannetty, Heavenly Bodies, Tatanka, Sherri Martel.

Jan. 1994: Roasted, Broiled, Fried, Baked ... Any Way You Cook It, Hogan's A Chicken! Also: Rude-Flair, Bagwell & Scorpio, Jim Cornette, Jerry Lawler, Hansen & T. Funk-Abdullah & Sullivan.

May 1994: Aftershocks! How The Royal Rumble Shook Up WrestleMania. Also: Hulk Hogan, Boss, Douglas-Sherri, Patriot, improve WCW.

July 1994: Ric Flair vs. Hulk Hogan: We Preview The Inevitable Battle. Also: Dreamer-Snuka, Jim Crockett's WWN, Ted DiBiase, Shane Douglas, Terra Ryzing.

Aug. 1994: Bret's Nightmare Team Becomes A Reality: Owen Hart & Yokozuna. Also: Cactus-Vader, MOM, Flair-Badd, Nasty Boys, Luna Vachon.

Sept. 1994 (Special Issue): WWF Midyear Report! Also: Big Van Vader, Parker-Hollywood Blonds, Sting-Rude, WWF legal problems, Prince Khans, Bunkhouse-Rhodes, Public Enemy.

Jan. 1995: Our Holiday Wish List For 1995. Also: Johnny B. Badd, DiBiase-Tatanka, Bob Backlund, PG-13, Hacksaw Duggan.

March 1995 (Special Issue): 1994—The Year In Pictures. Also: Sullivan-Hogan-Sullivan, WWF '95-WWF '85, Ric Flair, MOM, 911.

April 1995: Imagine Wrestling Today If ... Also: Gunn & Smothers, Harlem Heat, Money Inc., Lawler-Cornette.

May 1994: Aftershocks! How The Royal Rumble Shook Up WrestleMania. Also: Big Bossman, Sherri-Douglas, Hulk Hogan, The Patriot.

July 1995: Hulk Hogan's Contract With America. Also: Marty Jannetty, Brian Pillman, Lawrence Taylor, Bill Dundee.

Oct. 1995: President Backlund?! Also: Steiners, Austin & Pillman, Miss Texas, Gordon Solie.

Nov. 1995: If Savage Can't Silence Flair, He's Through! Also: Jarrett-Ramon, Mabel, Hogan & Renegade, WWF legends roundtable.

Dec. 1995 (Special Issue): Shawn Michaels: Too Good To Be Second Best! Also: Wrestling rulebook, Vega-Ramon, Mama Cornette, Kamala-Duggan, Big Van Vader.

Winter 1995: Exclusive Preview: Sting vs. Hogan: This Time It's For Real! Also: Steiners, Yankem-Undertaker, Bodies-Cornette, Arn Anderson.

May 1996: WWF In-Vader! Can Bret, Shawn, & Razor Play The Pain Game? Also: Public Enemy, Steve Austin, wrestling oddities, Kensuke Sasaki, Ric Flair.

June 1996 (Special Issue): Fear Of Height! How The Giant Is Paralyzing Wrestling. Also: Shock 'n' Wrestling, Razor Ramon, Brian Pillman, Konnan.

Aug. 1996: Shawn Michaels: Finally—He Has The Title ... Now Here's What He's Gotta Do With It! Also: Public Enemy-Nastys, Bret Hart, Booty Man-Sullivan, Mabel.

Sept. 1996 (Special Issue): WWF Midyear Report. Also: Savio Vega, Sabu-Scorpio, Chris Benoit, Goldust, Olympians, Giant.

Oct. 1996: Muscling Back To The Top: The Warrior Is Ready To Rule Again. Also: Warriors & Sasaki-Steiners & Norton, Razor & Diesel, Mabel & Mo, Blue Meanie.

Nov. 1996: Brian Pillman: Next WWF Champ! Also: Giant-Sting, Ray Stevens, Dick Murdoch, Cloudy, John Tenta, WCW shuffle.

Dec. 1996 (Special Issue): WWF vs. WCW: Top 10 Faceoff! Also: Ahmed Johnson, Ric Flair, Mero & Sable, Goldust, Sandman.

Holiday 1996: WCW Shocker: Randy Savage Is Set To Join Hulk Hogan's NWO! Also: Steve Austin, Michaels-Goldust, Arn Anderson, Van Dam-Sabu, Steve Williams.

Jan. 1997: It Could Happen! Hogan's Next Move ... Buy WCW! Also: Undertaker, New Jack, Owen-Bulldog, Ted DiBiase.

Feb. 1997: Wrestling's Top Stars: What 1997 Has In Store For Them! Also: Michaels-Hart, Pit Bull I, Rey Misterio Jr., Kevin Nash.

July 1997: Infighting, Politics, Egos: Is The NWO Losing Its Edge? Also: WWF-ECW, Dean Malenko, Super 8 tourney, Jerry Lawler.

Oct. 1997: Bret Hart & Shawn Michaels: How Low Will They Go? Also: Paul E. Dangerously, DDP & Kimberly, Rhodes family, Keiji Muto.

Nov. 1997: 10-Year Grudge! Lex Luger's Career Ruined By J.J. Dillon? Also: Shawn-Bret, Jeff Jarrett, Hunter Hearst Helmsley, Dreamer-Raven, Dan Severn.

Dec. 1997 (Special Issue): WWF vs. WCW: Top 10 Faceoff! Also: Guerreros, Taz, Syxx, Paul Bearer, Brian Christopher.

Hol. 1997: First Owen ... Then 'Taker ... Then Hogan: Who's Gonna Go Next? Also: Steve Austin, Bret Hart, Lex Luger, Ric Flair, Dean Malenko.

April 1998: "We've Won!" Maybe ... But Can The NWO Handle Its Own Success? Also: Ken Shamrock, Steiners-Warriors, Douglas & Francine, Rocky Maivia.

May 1998: Mike Tyson: Stepping Into Wrestling Hell! Also: Bischoff-Bret-Zbyszko, Meng & Barbarian, Hunter Hearst Helmsley, ECWA ladder match.

June 1998: Hollywood Hogan: 10 More Dirty Deeds ... And Then He's Outta Here! Also: DeGeneration X, Jim Cornette, Randy Savage, yesterday and today.

July 1998: Death Wish! Costing Hogan The Title Isn't Enough For The Macho Man: What's Next? Also: Ric Flair, Headbangers-Rock 'n' Rolls, Chris Chetti, Mero & Sable.

Aug. 1998: We Stand Behind Ya, Vince! It's Time To Fire Austin. Also: Luna-Sable, Randy Savage, Dean Malenko, Super 8 tourney.

Sept. 1998 (Special Issue): WWF Midyear Report. Also: Nash-Hogan, Rocky Maivia, Bill Goldberg, Antonio Inoki.

Oct. 1998: The Mother Of All Pay-Per-Views! A WWF-WCW Supercard Is No Longer Just Talk! Also: Sable, Undertaker, Randy Savage, Sabu & Van Dam.

Nov. 1998: Demons Be Damned! Sting Makes The Giant See Red! Also: McMahon-Dude, Jarrett-Blackman, Melanie Pillman, Rey Misterio Jr.

Dec. 1998 (Special Issue): WWF vs. WCW: Top 10 Faceoff! Also: ECW midyear report, Ric Flair, Kane.

Hol. 1998: "Quit, Mick!" A Desperate Plea From A Distraught Wife. Also: Chris Jericho, Jason Sensation, wrestlers vs. celebrities, hardcore war.

Jan. 1999: Stone-Cold's Personal Survivor Series. Also: Rock-HHH, NWA, Bret Hart, Howard Finkel, three-way title matches.

Feb. 1999: Hot Rocks! The Anger That Drives Shamrock & The Rock. Also: McMahon-Austin, Spike Dudley, Eric Bischoff, Perry Saturn.

March 1999 (Special Issue): 1998—The Year In Pictures. Also: Hall & Nash, Goldust, Mr. Ooh La La, The Undertaker.

April 1999: Hogan's Retirement: White House Or White Lie? Also: DDP-Hart, Taz-Douglas, Steve Austin, Mankind.

May 1999: Team Coverage: The NWO Reunion! Also: Kane-McMahon, Dallas Page, Funk-Abdullah, WWF sideshow.

June 1999 (Special Issue): Ric Flair: The 10 Feats He Must Accomplish Before He's Through. Also: Rocky Maivia, Juventud Guerrera, Billy Gunn, body parts quiz section.

July 1999: Our Bottom Line ... It's High Time Austin Shows McMahon Respect! Also: Jerry Lawler, Rey Misterio Jr., Ken Shamrock, DDP-Bigelow-Goldberg.

Aug. 1999: This Man Is Pure Evil! Trust Hogan And He'll Take You To Hell! Plus: Owen Hart, Vader, Sable.

Sept. 1999 (Special Issue): WWF Midyear Report. Also: DDP-Sting, Douglas-Credible, Big Show-McMahons, Disco Inferno, Keirn & Lane.

Oct. 1999: Shawn Michaels' Game Of Corporate Chess! Are The McMahons His Pawns? Also: Steiners, Billy Gunn, Savage & George.

Nov. 1999: Austin's New Powers: Shag Vince? Yeah, Baby! Also: Arn-Sid, Hardy Boys, Ernest Miller, Naoya Ogawa.

Dec. 1999 (Special Issue): WWF vs. WCW: Top 10 Faceoff! Also: ECW midyear report, David & Ric Flair, Test & Stephanie.

Hol. 1999: Before The WWF Can Sell ... Read What They Had To Tell! Also: Kanyon, Big Show, Spike & Mahoney-Axl & New Jack, Kevin Nash.

Jan. 2000: An Insider's Analysis: Why The Guys Can't Handle Chyna. Also: Revolution, ECW expansion, Guerrero & Misterio, WWF/WCW/ECW women.

Feb. 2000: When Will Mankind Finally Tell The Rock ... "Put A Sock In It"? Also: Goldberg, Chris Jericho, Sabu, Harlem Heat.

Apr. 2000: Can The WWF Survive Without Steve Austin? Also: Dawn Marie-Francine, Meng, Big Show, Madusa.

May 2000: StePHONY: The Most Mistrusted McMahon Of All! Also: Harlem Heat & Midnight, David & Ric Flair, Kurt Angle, Rhino.

June 2000 (Special Issue): The Rock: No. 1 On The Jabroni Hit List! Also: Awesome-Van Dam, Kurt Angle, Vampiro, federation jumpers, book of lists.

July 2000: Tori/Torrie, What's The Story? How They Rank In 10 Crucial Categories. Also: Big Show, Tank Abbott, Too Cool, Rhodes-Dreamer, Jeff Jarrett.

Aug. 2000: We're Con-Vinced! This Attack Saved The WWF! Also: Lex Luger, Radicals, Sandman & Rhino, Cyrus.

Sept. 2000 (Special Issue): WWF Mid-Year Report. Also: Mike Awesome, Nova & Chetti, Paul Wight, Chyna, Dr. Sam Sheppard.

Oct. 2000: Is Chyna Robbing Eddie Of His Latino Heat? Also: Abbott-Steiner, Scotty Too Hotty, Rob Van Dam, David Flair.

Nov. 2000: Special Fear Issue—Rock-Benoit, Ric Flair, HBK. Also: ECW mid-year report, Bill Goldberg.

Dec. 2000 (Special Issue): WWF vs. WCW: Top 10 Faceoff! Also: Goldberg-Triple-H, Daffney, Christian & Edge, Jeff Peterson.

(ALL-COLOR BEGINNING WITH THE JANUARY 2001 ISSUE)

Jan. 2001: WWF Brat-titude! Does Steph Always Get Her Way? Not On Your Life! Also: Lance Storm, Mick Foley, Goldberg, Steve Corino, Steve Blackman, Torrie Wilson.

March 2001: Triple-H & The Rock: 10 Reasons They Should Trust Each Other ... 10 Reasons They Should Not! Also: Scott Steiner, Chris Candido, Rob Van Dam, McMahon-ECW, Steven Richards, WCW factions.

May 2001: Do Anything You Want, Stone-Cold: We Can't Hate You. Also: Kronic, Rikishi, Steve Corino, Goldberg, Edge & Christian, Kane.

July 2001: Jerichoholics Beware! Serious Withdrawal Symptoms Are In Store! Also: Tajiri, Steph-Test, Undertaker, Mike Awesome, WCW Elite, Albert.

Sept. 2001: The Rock's Choice: Honor Over Glory! Also: WrestleMania X-Seven, Undertaker-Triple-H, Shane-WCW, TCL II, Scott Hall, Vince McMahon, Chris Jericho.

Nov. 2001: Goldberg! Da Man Who Could Make Or Break Wrestling! Also: Dudleys, Steve Corino, Chris Benoit, Dusty Rhodes, Lita, WWF top tier.

Jan. 2002: Can The Rock Handle The Unrelenting Pressure Of Fame? Also: RVD, Paul Heyman, Terry Gordy, Flash-Jericho, Tajiri-Tazz, WWF-Alliance

March 2002: Outsiders Looking In! Hall & Nash Take Aim At The WWF! Also: Ivory, Austin-Angle, Christian-Edge, what's ahead in '02.

May 2002: Ric Flair: 10 Reasons He Terrifies Vince McMahon. Also: Undertaker, Jeff Hardy, Survivor Series, S.A.T., report cards.

July 2002: Hail The NWO ... But Don't Forget The N-W-Woes! Also: Edge, Billy & Chuck, Leviathon, Jericho-Flair, Goldust.

Sept. 2002: What's Left? Hulk Hogan's Five Remaining Tasks. Also: Steve Austin, Kurt Angle, Rey Misterio Jr., Jeff Peterson, WWF draft.

Nov. 2002: Who's Next? The Stars That Could Replace Stone-Cold. Also: Torrie Wilson, Davey Boy Smith, Ken Shamrock, Funk-Abdullah-Rhodes-Sullivan, WWE shockers, indy roulette.

Jan. 2003: War Games! WWE Is Out Of Control ... And Vinnie Mac Loves It! Also: Rey Misterio Jr., A.J. Styles, Rikishi-Gangrel, The Rock, Christian.

March 2003: The WrestleMania XIX We Want To See! Also: Terry Funk, Rey Misterio Jr., Nidia, NWA-TNA, what's ahead in '03.

May 2003: A Permanent Replacement For The Rock? Book It! Also: Smackdown, Joanie & Syxx-Pac, Raw report cards, Shawn Michaels, Victoria.

July 2003: In Tune With Steve Austin—A Comprehensive Guide To Stone-Cold's Red-Hot Comeback. Also: Kurt Angle, Amazing Red, The Sheik, Bill DeMott, Al Snow, Ric Flair.

THE Wrestler

Please send me the back issues of THE WRESTLER I have checked off. I have enclosed $5 for each issue as payment in full or provided my credit card number to charge my purchase ($20 minimum).

Name _____

Address _____

City _____

State _____ Zip _____

Please indicate method of payment:

☐ Check or money order
(enclosed and payable to London Publishing Co.)

☐ VISA # _____

☐ MasterCard # _____

Expiration Date: ___/___
MO YR

Signature: _____

For all orders outside the U.S., you must add $1.50 for every back issue to be sent via surface mail, and $3.00 for every back issue to be sent airmail. Int'l money order in U.S. funds only. Please allow 6-8 weeks for delivery.

Send To: LONDON PUBLISHING CO. BOX 910 FT. WASHINGTON, PA 19034

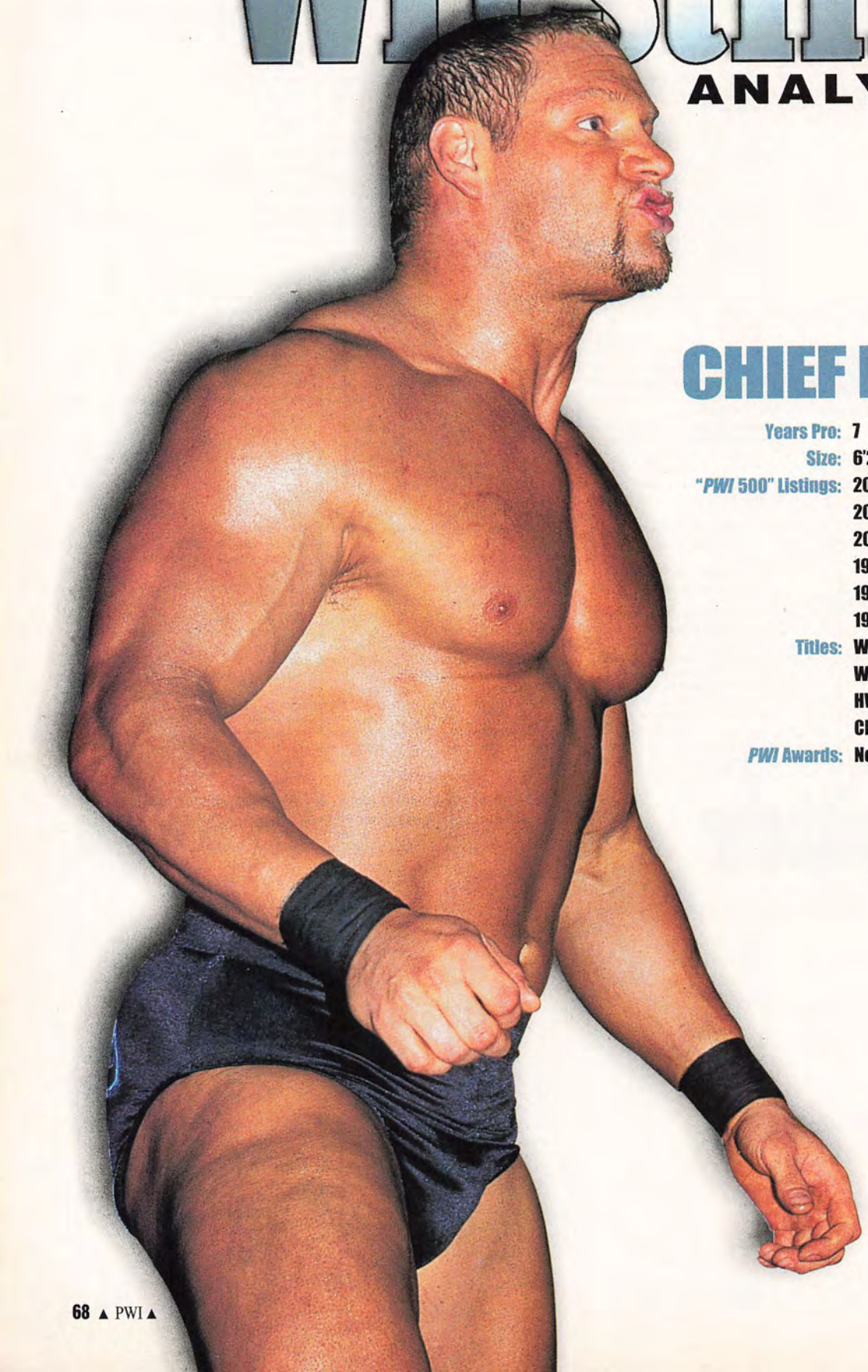
ONLY $5 EACH!

☐ MAY 79	☐ AUG 84	☐ MAY 88	☐ JUL 91	☐ JAN 95	☐ JUN 98	☐ AUG 00
☐ APR 80	☐ NOV 84	☐ JUN 88	☐ AUG 91	☐ MAR 95	☐ JUL 98	☐ SEP 00
☐ AUG 80	☐ DEC 84	☐ AUG 88	☐ NOV 91	☐ APR 95	☐ AUG 98	☐ OCT 00
☐ SEP 80	☐ JAN 85	☐ OCT 88	☐ DEC 91	☐ JUN 95	☐ SEP 98	☐ NOV 00
☐ FEB 81	☐ FEB 85	☐ JAN 89	☐ JAN 92	☐ JUL 95	☐ OCT 98	☐ DEC 00
☐ JUN 81	☐ APR 85	☐ MAR 89	☐ FEB 92	☐ OCT 95	☐ NOV 98	☐ JAN 01
☐ AUG 81	☐ MAY 85	☐ APR 89	☐ MAR 92	☐ NOV 95	☐ DEC 98	☐ MAR 01
☐ OCT 81	☐ JUN 85	☐ MAY 89	☐ APR 92	☐ DEC 95	☐ HOL 98	☐ MAY 01
☐ JAN 82	☐ JUL 85	☐ JUN 89	☐ MAY 92	☐ WIN 95	☐ JAN 99	☐ JUL 01
☐ APR 82	☐ AUG 85	☐ JUL 89	☐ JUN 92	☐ MAY 96	☐ FEB 99	☐ SEP 01
☐ MAY 82	☐ OCT 85	☐ AUG 89	☐ JUL 92	☐ JUN 96	☐ MAR 99	☐ NOV 01
☐ JUN 82	☐ MAY 86	☐ SEP 89	☐ AUG 92	☐ AUG 96	☐ APR 99	☐ JAN 02
☐ JUL 82	☐ JUN 86	☐ OCT 89	☐ SEP 92	☐ SEP 96	☐ MAY 99	☐ MAR 02
☐ AUG 82	☐ JUL 86	☐ NOV 89	☐ OCT 92	☐ OCT 96	☐ JUN 99	☐ MAY 02
☐ SEP 82	☐ NOV 86	☐ JAN 90	☐ NOV 92	☐ NOV 96	☐ JUL 99	☐ JUL 02
☐ NOV 82	☐ DEC 86	☐ MAR 90	☐ DEC 92	☐ DEC 96	☐ AUG 99	☐ SEP 02
☐ DEC 82	☐ JAN 87	☐ APR 90	☐ JAN 93	☐ HOL 96	☐ SEP 99	☐ NOV 02
☐ JAN 83	☐ FEB 87	☐ JUL 90	☐ FEB 93	☐ JAN 97	☐ OCT 99	☐ JAN 03
☐ FEB 83	☐ MAR 87	☐ AUG 90	☐ MAR 93	☐ FEB 97	☐ NOV 99	☐ MAR 03
☐ MAY 83	☐ JUN 87	☐ SEP 90	☐ APR 93	☐ JUL 97	☐ DEC 99	☐ MAY 03
☐ JUN 83	☐ JUL 87	☐ OCT 90	☐ MAY 93	☐ OCT 97	☐ HOL 99	☐ JUL 03
☐ JUL 83	☐ SEP 87	☐ DEC 90	☐ NOV 93	☐ NOV 97	☐ JAN 00	
☐ SEP 83	☐ OCT 87	☐ FEB 91	☐ JAN 94	☐ DEC 97	☐ FEB 00	
☐ NOV 83	☐ DEC 87	☐ MAR 91	☐ MAY 94	☐ HOL 97	☐ APR 00	
☐ DEC 83	☐ JAN 88	☐ APR 91	☐ JUL 94	☐ MAR 98	☐ MAY 00	
☐ MAR 84	☐ FEB 88	☐ MAY 91	☐ AUG 94	☐ APR 98	☐ JUN 00	
☐ JUL 84	☐ MAR 88	☐ JUN 91	☐ SEP 94	☐ MAY 98	☐ JUL 00	

Indicate substitute choice: _____

6115/03-03

THE Wrestling ANALYST



CHIEF MORLEY

Years Pro: 7
Size: 6'2", 250
"*PWI* 500" Listings: 2002—74
2001—127
2000—74
1999—25
1998—105
1997—56
Titles: WWF Intercontinental (2 times)
WWF European
HWA tag team
CMLL heavyweight
***PWI* Awards:** None

[[the numbers]]

Offense (8.0): Morley's offense has slipped considerably since he became Raw General Manager Eric Bischoff's chief of staff. He was fairly aggressive in the ring before that appointment, but no one backpedals more in the ring than a wrestling "official." Seriously, can anyone imagine Morley attempting a money shot against a top-level opponent ... and succeeding?

Defense (9.0): When Morley (then known as Val Venis) was critiqued in the May 1999 issue of *The Wrestling Analyst,* it was noted that his counterwrestling ability was a weak point and that he usually had to wait for his opponent to make a mistake before regaining control of a match. The same is true now, but he's far savvier in detecting and capitalizing on those mistakes.

Experience (8.5): The Chief is a rarity in wrestling. Competing as the masked Steele in Mexico, the muscular Canadian gained experience in Lucha Libre, which made him uniquely suited for a career in the power-driven, fast-paced WWE. He has mastered the WWE ring style—and, today, that's what counts most.

Conditioning (9.0): Pushing a pencil won't do much for Morley's biceps. In addition, he missed several months in 2000 and 2001 due to a neck injury, and was sidelined again when several weights fell on his head and neck while he was training in 2002. But he has looked surprisingly buff in the ring of late. His physique is just as impressive as it was several years ago, though it doesn't seem to be doing much for him.

Science (8.5): As an unofficial trainer in the HWA in 2001 and 2002, Morley passed along plenty of technical knowledge to up-and-comers, even winning that promotion's tag team title with then-developmental wrestler Steve Bradley. If Morley ever faces Chris Benoit, for example, fans might be surprised by what he has to offer.

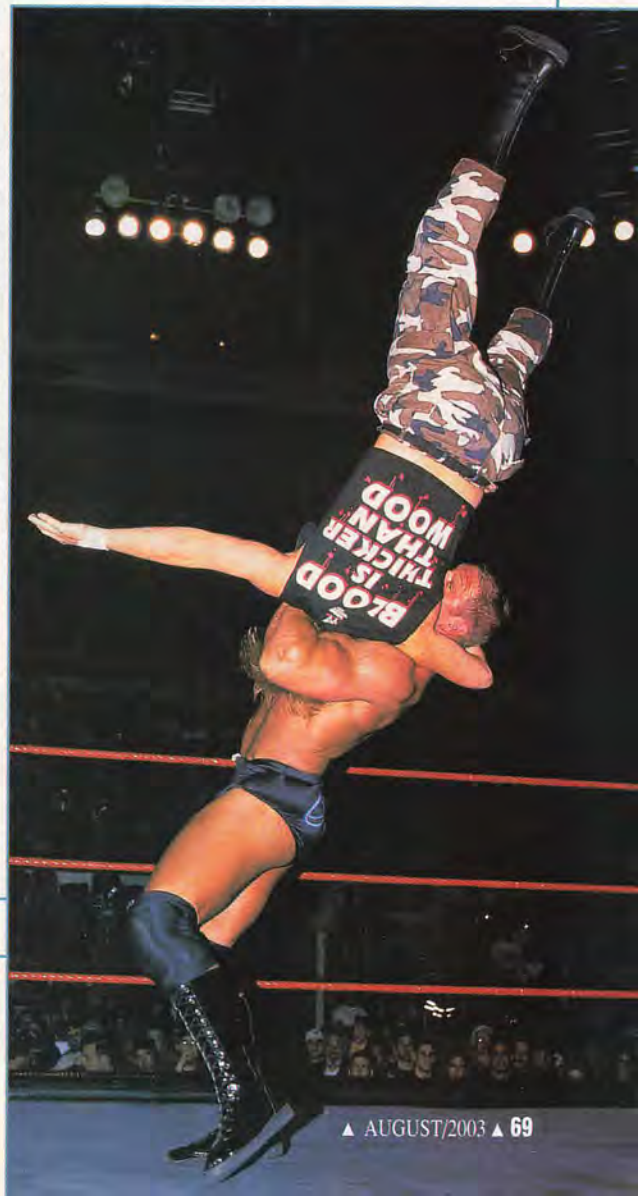
Stamina (8.5): When *The Wrestling Analyst* last examined Morley, we noted how he tended to sweat profusely once his matches went beyond the five-minute mark. Because he no longer takes a fresh shower before his matches, this condition has become more pronounced. Morley suffered terribly in the white Good Humor Man outfit he wore while in Right To Censor.

Power (8.5): Morley shoved around lots of Luchadors in Mexico, and he's still capable of overpowering smaller foes, especially Spike Dudley as of late. Buh Buh Ray and D-Von Dudley easily neutralized his strength, however, with their double-team moves in recent tag team and handicap matches. His power has diminished a bit over the past couple of years.

Speed (9.0): His slight loss of power has not altered his impressive speed. Trying to keep pace with the youngsters in the Heartland Wrestling Association was a good experience for him and, fortunately, he hasn't suffered from too many of the knee problems that are typical of other wrestlers in their early-30s. He gained tremendous coordination in Mexico.

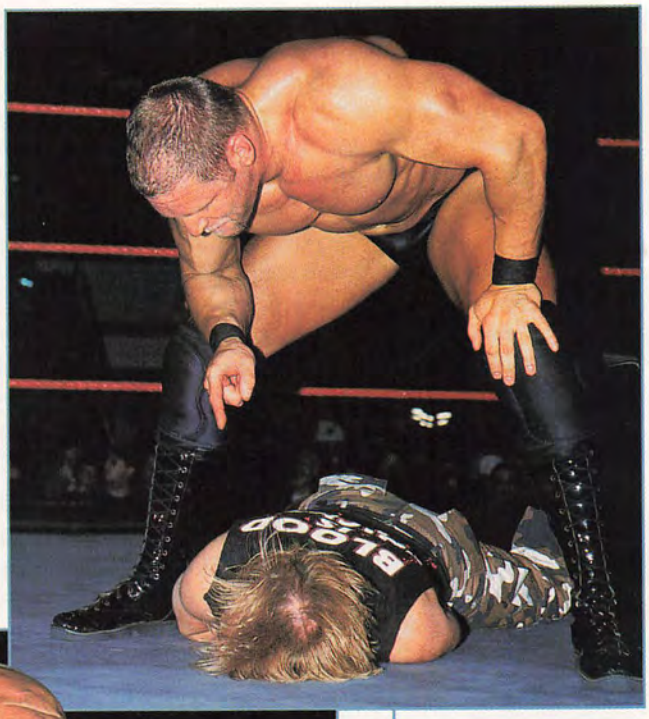
Ability To Absorb Punishment (8.0): Morley rarely submitted when he was a contender for the Intercontinental and European titles. Now that he has been cast as a suit-and-tie bureaucrat, it seems as if WWE has prematurely given up on his prospects as a main-eventer. It would be no major surprise if he tapped out to "Lil'" Spike in the near future.

Quality Of Opposition (8.0): As Bischoff's chief of staff, Morley will face only the men whom "Easy E" has grudges against. Morley has spent too much time battling the Dudley family, and not enough time concentrating on his in-ring career. Right now, it's hard to envision him as a legitimate challenger for the Raw championship.



① **Thanks to his exposure to many different styles of wrestling during his seven-year career, Chief Morley is as fundamentally sound as just about anyone on the WWE roster. He executes a picture-perfect vertical suplex. It's unfortunate that many of his skills are being wasted now.**

② Morley shows the same kind of aggression he has through most of his WWE career ... as long as he's in the ring with Spike Dudley, an opponent he's expected to dominate. Against WWE's bigger boys, he does too much backpedaling.



③ Whether it involves an enemy of his boss, Eric Bischoff (like Steve Austin), or one of his own (like Spike or one of the other Dudleys), Chief Morley's career is all about creating and settling grudges now. This makes it hard for people to take him seriously as a wrestler now.

Repertoire: Morley wrestles in the quintessential WWE style, meaning that he depends on his opponent bouncing off the ropes to execute most of his moves. That makes Irish whips, back elbows, clotheslines, and kicks to the midsection staples of his repertoire. His finisher remains the money shot, a splash from the top rope. Unfortunately, the Chief hasn't had many chances to unleash it lately.

Strengths: He is nothing if not adaptable. In Mexico, far from his native Ontario, he beat Rayo de Jalisco Jr. for the CMLL title only one month after his debut. As "adult film star" Val Venis, he was one of the most entertaining midcard stars of the "Attitude" era. During his off time, he has been a hands-on trainer. Just ask one of his HWA trainees or Ontarian protege Bobby Rude. And, despite the dead-end nature of his "Chief" character, he does it with gusto.

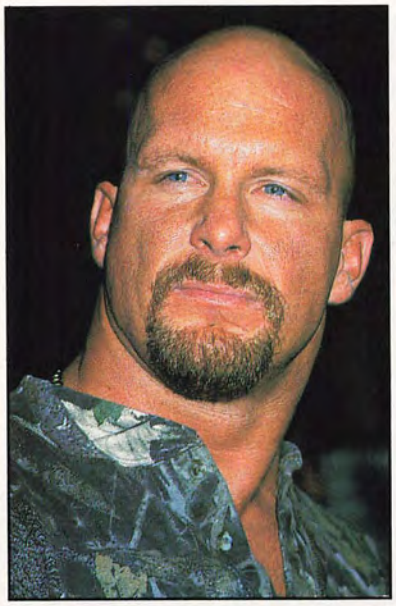
Weaknesses: Nagging neck injuries will probably haunt him in the future, but his ailments are no worse than those of other superstars. A more serious problem is that he's too willing to go along with any silly idea the creative team offers him. Another issue is his libertarian political views. While he has a right to express himself, his outspokenness might harm his career if the wrong person doesn't agree with what he has to say on a controversial issue.

Defining Career Moment: Val Venis had returned to the WWF with a more aggressive attitude and upset Rikishi for the Intercontinental title, and was then slated for a rematch against the big man in a steel cage on July 23, 2000. The 424-pound Rikishi leaped off the top of the cage and flattened Venis with a devastating body splash. Incredibly, Venis absorbed that awesome move, mounted a comeback, and retained the title.

Future: The WWE creative team has failed Morley perhaps more than any other star. His Val Venis character was wildly popular, and WWE was unable to capitalize on that momentum to make him a main-eventer, either as Val Venis or Sean Morley. If his stint in RTC didn't kill off his chances of winning a world title, then his time as Chief Morley just might do the trick.

④ **It is good to see Venis incorporate newer moves such as a seated power bomb into his matches occasionally. If he keeps freshening up his repertoire and growing as a wrestler, maybe WWE will finally give him the kind of push as a full-time wrestler that he's more than ready for.**

⑤ **Morley can deliver knife-edge chops in a corner with so much power, quickness, and precision. If he can remain on the offensive during a match, he's in good shape. It's not always easy for him to turn a match's momentum around once he's on the defensive, however.**



Steve Austin vs. Bret Hart

Data Sheet

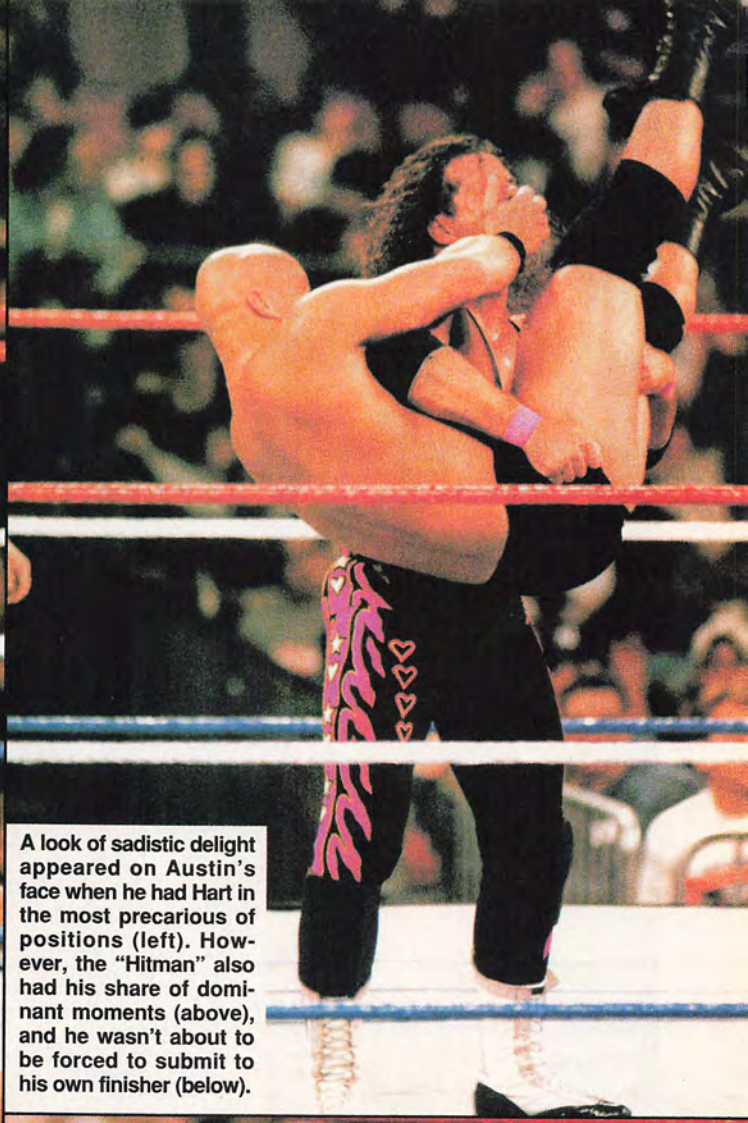
Title At Stake	None
Guest Referee	Ken Shamrock
Date	March 23, 1997
Event	WrestleMania XII
Site	Rosemont Horizon, Rosemont, Illinois

Synopsis

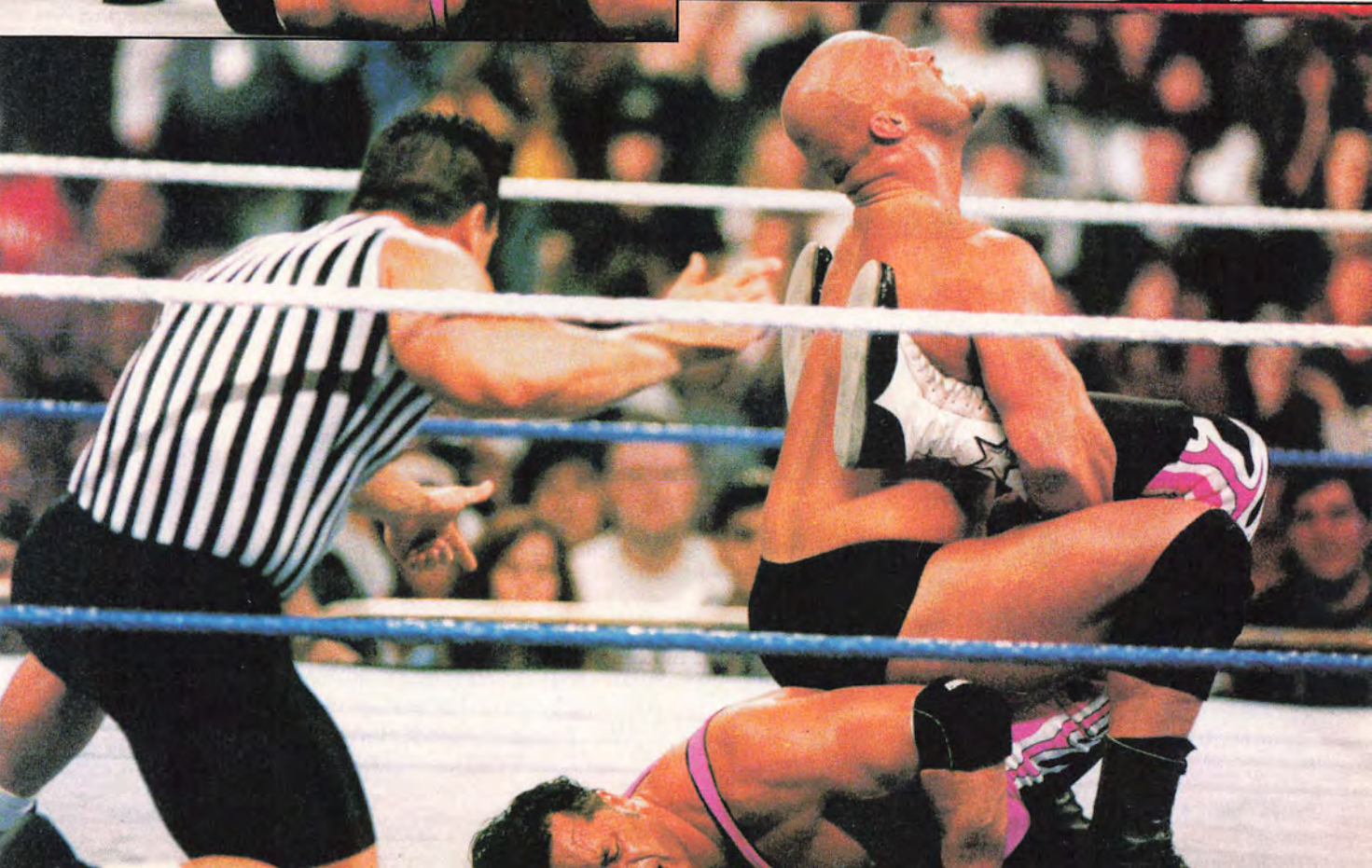
This was the match in which WWF "Attitude" was born.

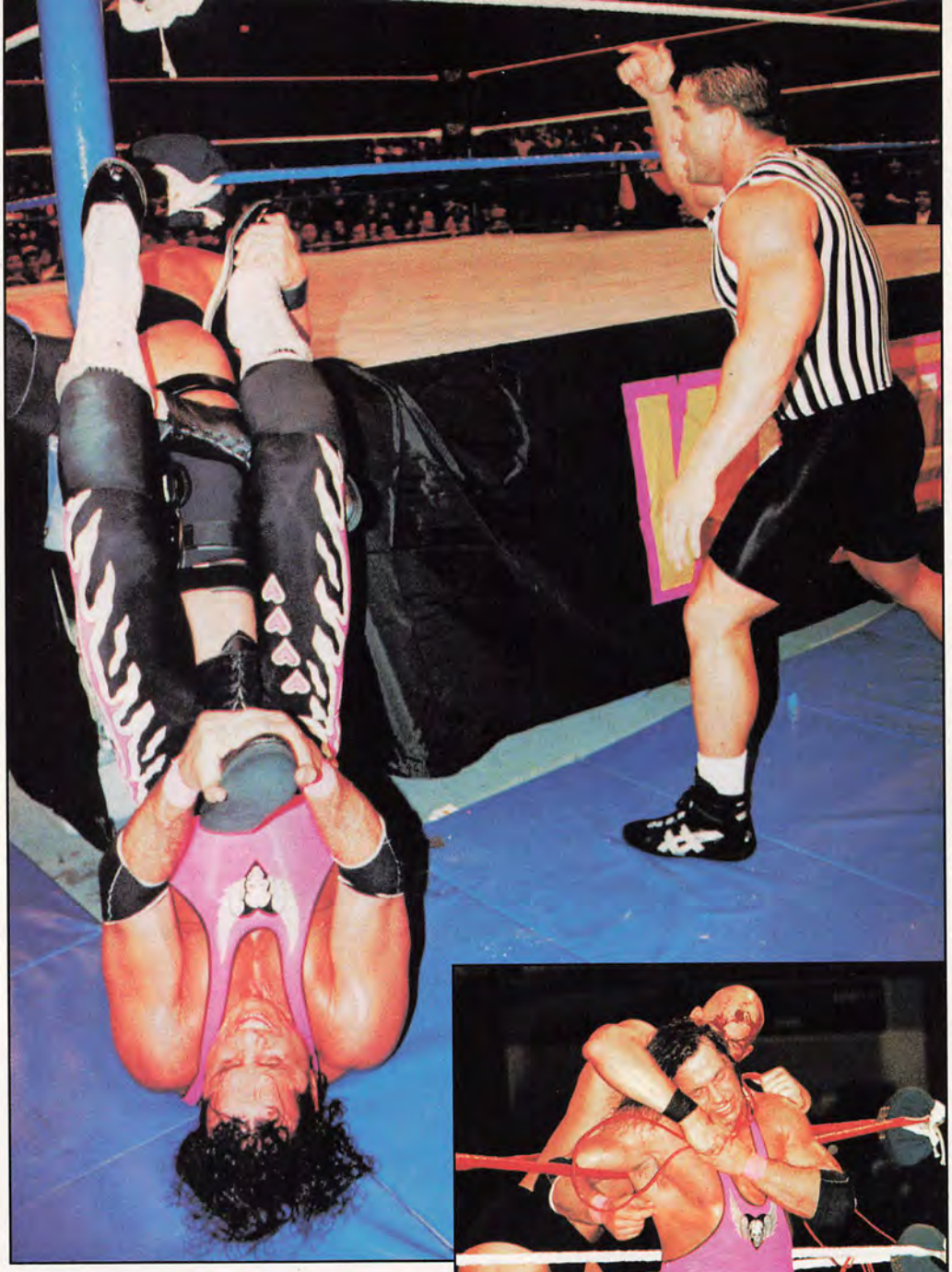
Steve Austin vs. Bret Hart at WrestleMania XIII established Austin as the WWF's hottest fan favorite and Bret Hart

Strategy is crucial in a submission match. Steve Austin, who usually tries to beat opponents down until they're vulnerable to a stunner, tried several holds he doesn't usually try, including an unorthodox armbar, to try to make Bret Hart quit.



A look of sadistic delight appeared on Austin's face when he had Hart in the most precarious of positions (left). However, the "Hitman" also had his share of dominant moments (above), and he wasn't about to be forced to submit to his own finisher (below).





Referee Ken Shamrock had a difficult time getting Bret Hart to break an unusual version of the figure-four leglock, one applied around a ringpost.

It was clear that Austin was evolving into a different kind of fan favorite when, as he choked Hart with an electrical cord, he heard a lot of cheers from the WrestleMania crowd.

as a bitter heel, and it started to set up the infamous Hart/Vince McMahon Montreal screw job that would happen less than eight months later.

A few months prior to this match, reports surfaced that Hart, a free agent, had been offered a lucrative contract by WCW. A defection by Hart could have been a mortal blow to the struggling WWF, but in the end, he chose to re-sign with McMahon. Throughout the fall of 1996, Austin—then a sadistic, despicable, despised heel—ran down Hart in interviews and claimed he was ducking his challenge.

Hart defeated Austin at Survivor Series 1996, but Austin stole the '97 Royal Rumble from his arch-rival to keep their feud alive, and then cost Hart his WWF title by interfering in his match against Sid Vicious.

While classic wrestling hero Hart complained about Austin's incessant interference, "Stone-Cold" began to build a fan following as an anti-hero. A submission match was signed for WrestleMania, and former Ultimate Fighting Championship superstar Ken Shamrock was named special referee to ensure order was maintained.

The match began quickly, as Austin tackled the "Hitman" and started firing rights to the head. It quickly spilled out of the ring, where Hart gained a brief advantage after hurling Austin into the ringpost. Austin recovered and battered Hart into the guardrails, first dropping him groin-first, and then dropping him throat-first. After some more wild back-and-forth action outside the ring, Austin took control and tossed Hart back into the ring. But before Austin could press his advantage, Hart displayed his "Excellence Of Execution," dropping Austin with a swinging neckbreaker and following up with an elbowdrop to the back of the head.

With Austin stunned, Hart went to work on Austin's

oft-injured left knee. In desperation, Austin connected with a Stone-Cold stunner out of nowhere, but he was too dazed to make a cover. Hart recovered and went back to the left leg, locking Austin's knee in a figure-four around the cornerpost.

When Austin refused to give in, Hart lost his cool and snatched a ringside chair. Before Hart could snap Austin's ankle in the chair, Austin pounded Hart with the chair. Austin slammed the chair into Hart's spine once more, and then battered Hart with suplexes and elbowdrops before locking on an armbar. When Hart refused to tap, Austin rolled him into a Boston crab until Hart reached the ropes.

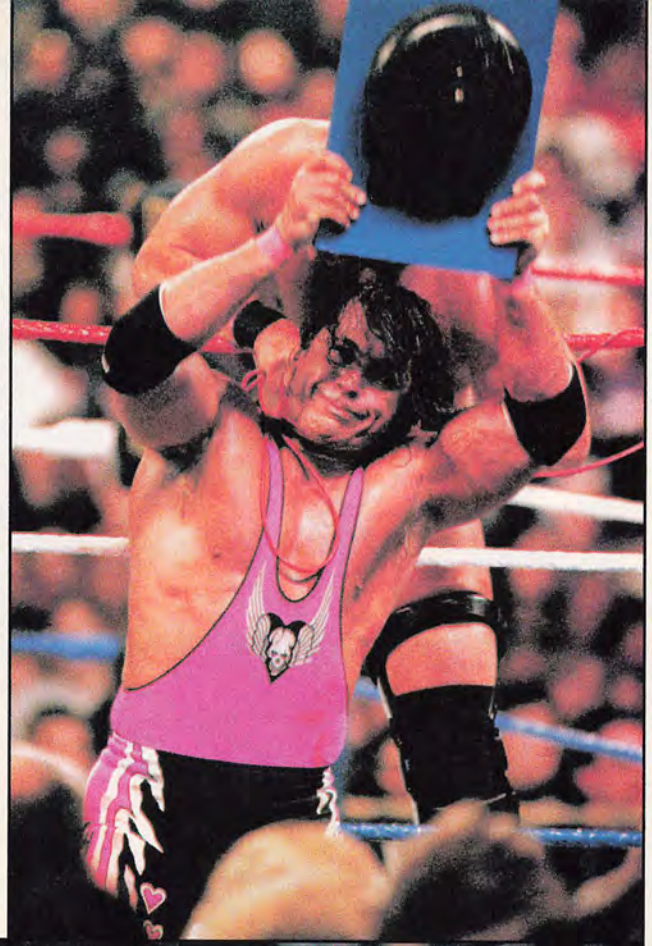
The match again spilled to the floor, and Hart this time sent Austin crashing into the timekeeper's table, opening a nasty gash on Austin's head. Hart attacked the wound and slammed Austin's face into the ringside stairs.

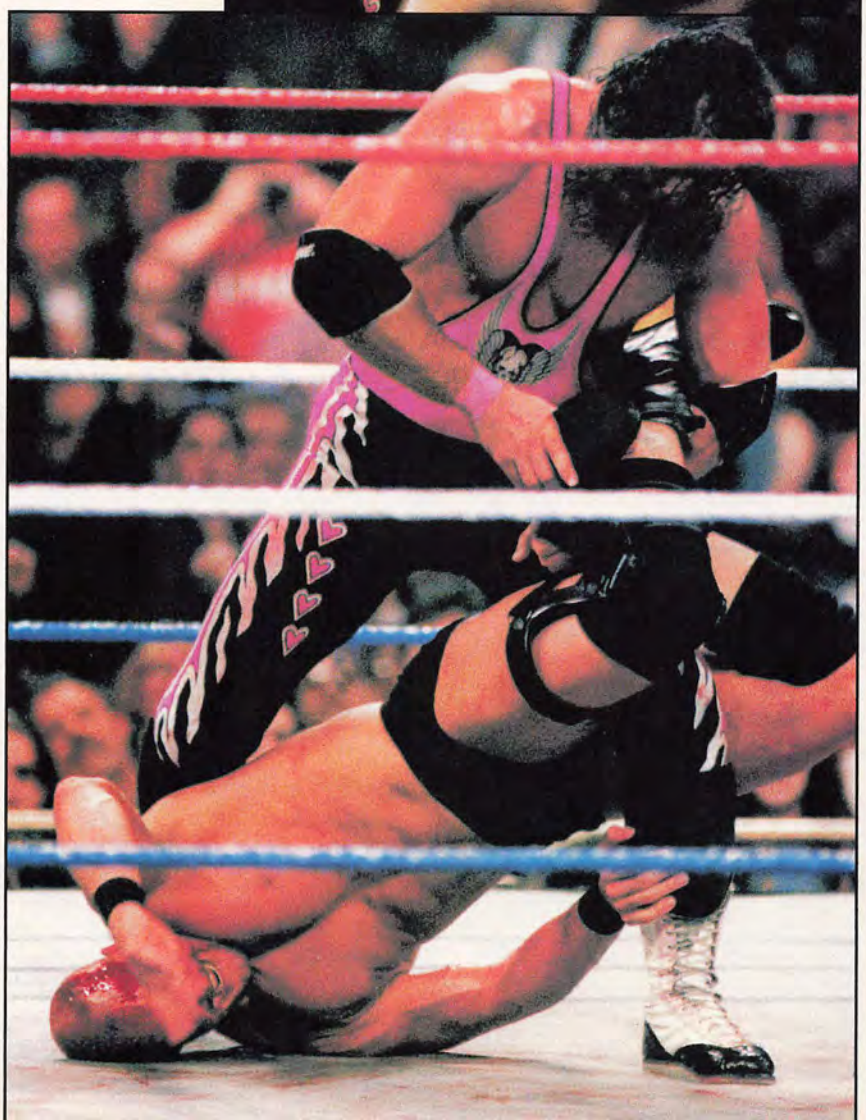
Once back in the ring, Hart pounded Austin's knee with the chair, but Austin came back with a low blow and a series of vicious stomps punctuated by a superplex. An exhausted Hart finally regained the upper hand after slamming the timekeeper's bell into Austin's head.

Finally, Hart locked Austin into his sharpshooter and put pressure on Austin's back and knee. Remarkably, Austin refused to submit. With his face a bloody mask, Austin tried to power out, but Hart locked the hold on even tighter. Blood poured from Austin's head like water gushing from a spigot, but he wouldn't surrender. In the end, the pain was too much for Austin as he faded into unconsciousness, forcing Shamrock to call for the bell.

Because Austin robbed Hart of the satisfaction of hearing him say, "I quit!" Bret continued beating on his unconscious foe before Shamrock ultimately made the save.

As Austin staggered out of the ring, he was stunned to hear the fans chanting his name. In one incredible match, Bret Hart had become a villain, and the villain—the *loser* of the match—became the most popular man in the WWF. A wonderfully exciting new era was underway. □





A shot to the head with the ring bell proved to be a huge turning point for the "Hitman" (top right). Not long after he connected with that vicious shot, he had Austin set up for the sharpshooter (right). The hold netted Bret a win, but not via submission.

PRO Wrestling ILLUSTRATED

the ultimate wrestler

Can you name the 7 wrestlers that make up the ultimate wrestler?

Answers will appear in the September issue of *PWI*.

[Key to June's Ultimate Wrestler]

Hat: Buff Bagwell
Eyes: Slash
Face: Road Warrior Animal
Right Arm: Scott Steiner
Left Arm: Chris Candido
Torso: Perry Saturn
Trunks/Legs: Steve Corino
Boots: Chris Benoit

You're at the airport. You see your favorite wrestler relaxing in one of the terminals. You rush up to him or her as questions fill your excited mind. There are certain things you just *have* to know about this person. Well, these are the 12 questions you'd *never* think of asking

12 questions

NIKITA

Five years ago, if someone had asked you where you'd be in 2003, what would you have said?

Fitness modeling, most likely. And probably living in California or Florida.

Who is the weirdest person you've ever met?

There's this guy Bubba in Colorado. He has no teeth and wears a wife beater tank top. Bubba came up to me and asked where he could get women like me.

What has been the hardest thing you've had to adjust to as a wrestler?

The physical damage a woman's body takes.

Has Nikita Koloff called you to get his name back?

Yeah, but does he have two first names like I do, Nikita Nicole?

Who's easier to approach at OVW, Danny Davis or Jim Cornette?

Actually, I'd have to say both of them. Jimmy's a trip. Danny Davis is a wonderful supreme human being whom I love working with in the ring. He's Oz behind the curtain. Jim, on the other hand—I have no problem approaching him. He's so outrageously funny.

What's the longest you've ever gone without taking a shower and why?

I can't take it without taking a shower after rolling around in a bloody, stinky ring. I don't want a staph infection. Besides, no one wants to wrestle a stinky person.

You have a choice between Paula Abdul, Jimmy Kimmel, and Jim Hellwig to live with on a deserted island for the rest of your life. Which would you choose and why?

Paula Abdul, because she could show me a few extra dance moves.

Is there any advantage to having a WWE developmental deal while working in OVW?

It's definitely a blessing. While I was in the Heartland Wrestling Association, I was more excited about going to OVW. Not only do I have Les Thatcher's training, but now I have Jim and Danny's as well. OVW is great place to train and it's like a little family.

What food are you not allowed to eat, yet crave?

Don't even get me started. I'm starving now. Oh, God, there are so many. Anything fattening. I love sweets, sugar. You name it—I love it. My mom's cooking is the best. I went home for Christmas, and Mom made everything from homemade wontons to fondue.

What's the one bad habit that you have but can't seem to kick?

Sometimes I procrastinate. It can be good, but sometimes it can be really bad.

What's the funniest thing Jim Cornette has ever said to you?

There are so many. "That kick couldn't have hurt my Aunt Fannie" ... When we had a bikini contest, Jim was doing commentary, and he said, "I don't think Nikita's gonna—" and then I disrobed and he said nothing. The look on his face was priceless.

You have a hammer, a midget, and a roulette wheel. What are your plans for the evening?

I'd cry *(laughs)*. I don't even know how to respond to that. It sounds like a good episode of *Jerry Springer*. □

fantastic finishers

With Mike Spillane

Any senton (or swanton) becomes more devastating and dangerous when the man taking the move is laying on a ladder!

senton

You might also hear it being called: Back splash, senton bomb

Where you might have seen it: Dick Togo, the former leader of Kaientai (a group that briefly appeared in WWE), has been using the senton as his finisher for many years. His win over Danny Collins for the British Commonwealth junior heavyweight title came as the direct result of one of his sentons. El Felino, one of EMLL's top stars, uses the senton regularly as well. The senton is, in fact, very common in Lucha Libre matches, and many popular Luchadors use it regularly. Everyone from La Parka to Super Porky makes use of it at least from time to time. Pro Wrestling NOAH's top star, Mitsuharu Misawa, even has a senton in his repertoire, a move that he incorporated into his arsenal during his days as the second Tiger Mask.

The scoop: This basic ground attack is easily more crushing than any elbowdrop, legdrop, fistdrop, or kneedrop. A wrestler brings his full weight down across his opponent's chest or mid-section, and the higher the elevation of the senton, the stronger the impact on contact. The most common variation of this simple move is the somersault senton, or flipping senton. It is exactly what it sounds like, a somersault through the air in which the wrestler lands back-first on his opponent. The flipping senton is often called the mortal in Lucha Libre, as many moves with turns or flips of at least 180 degrees are called. The Great Sasuke, of Michinoku Pro, invented a flipping senton that American fans know as the swanton or swanton bomb, the popular finishing move of WWE's Jeff Hardy. Sentons can be executed from the turnbuckles and, with a slingshot, can also be executed over the top rope from the ring apron. Shiima Nobunaga has a stellar slingshot senton you might hear called the senton atomico from time to time. Eddie Guerrero has a lightning-quick slingshot version that he uses regularly. Some other moves derived from the basic senton include the tope con hilo, the twisting senton, and the Quackensmash.

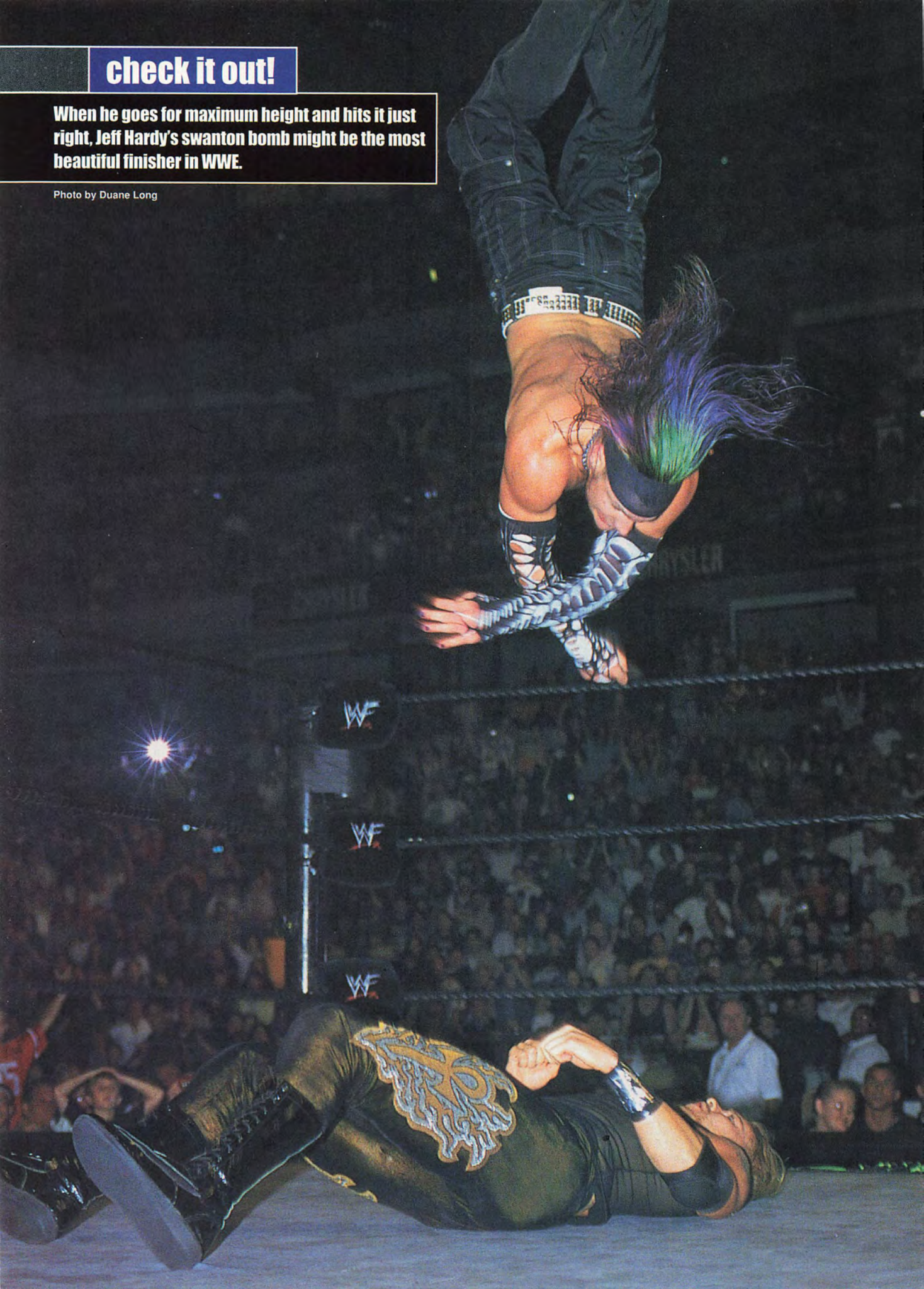
How it's done: The senton is a back-first attack. The basic senton is performed on an opponent who is lying on the mat. A wrestler will leap into the air, expose his back to the mat, and crash down onto his opponent's torso. It is a basic but effective move that's designed to knock the air out of an opponent. If executed properly, the senton can be used as a finishing move, although more times than not, it is used to punish an opponent in preparation for the execution of another high-impact move. It's important to have an opponent properly worn down before positioning him for a senton. If the opponent were to raise his knees while the person executing the move was in mid-air, the wrestler attempting the senton would risk incurring a serious back injury. A senton is best executed quickly, to prevent an opponent from rolling away or avoiding the impact in some other way. □

Mike Quackenbush's Quackensmash is one of the more unusual variations of the senton.

check it out!

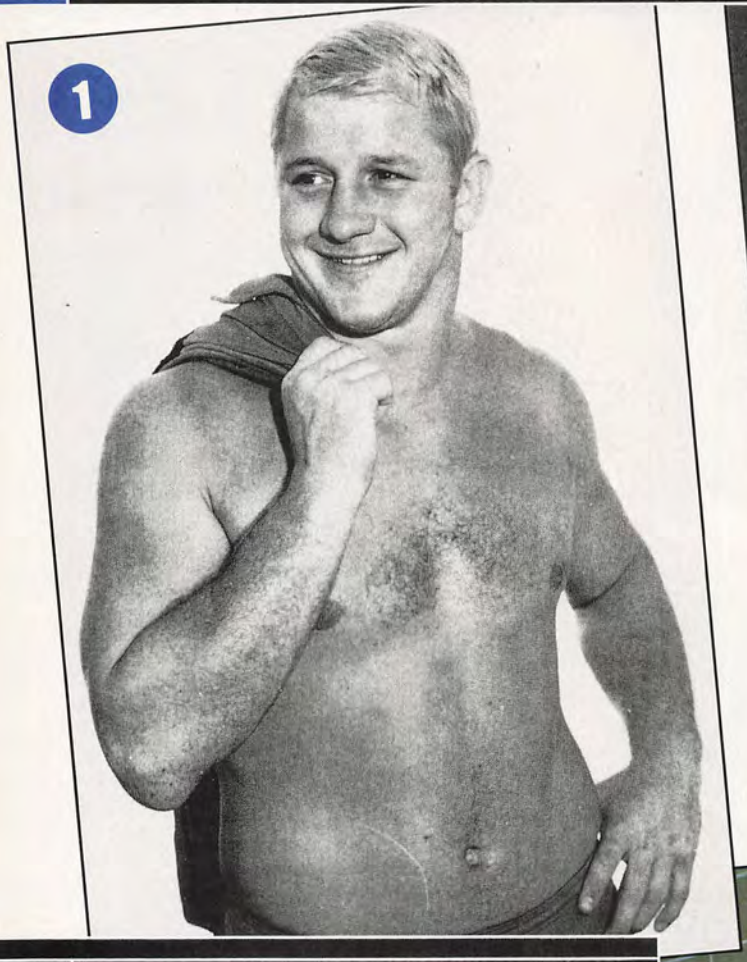
When he goes for maximum height and hits it just right, Jeff Hardy's swanton bomb might be the most beautiful finisher in WWE.

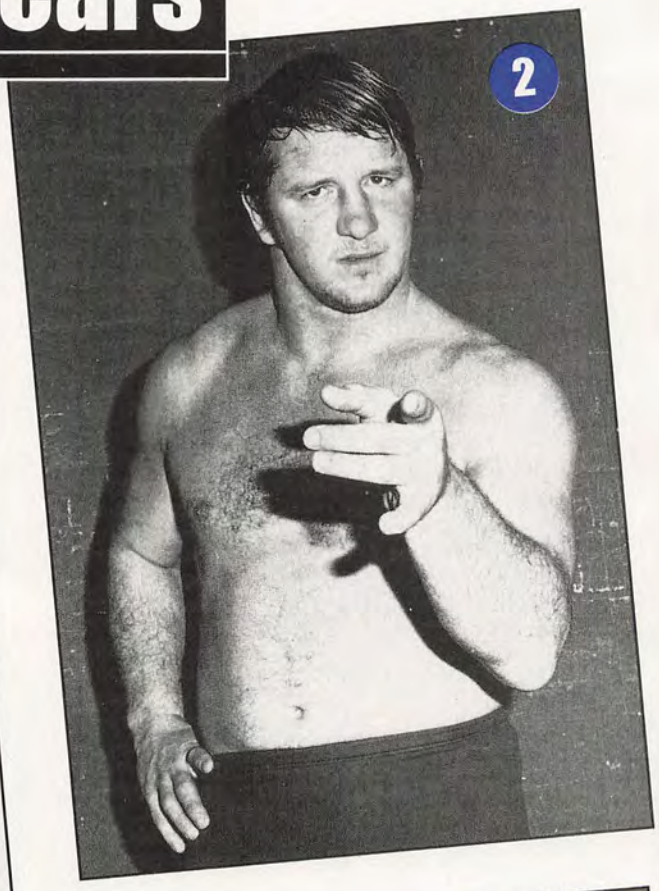
Photo by Duane Long



It's amazing how drastically certain superstars change their looks over the years. A change in hair color or hairstyle here, a new ring outfit there, a few more tattoos here and there, or the mother of all changes ... the total gimmick overhaul. Every month, *PWI* will show you just how much one of your favorites has transformed himself. Yeah, it really is the same person in all these photos!

through the years

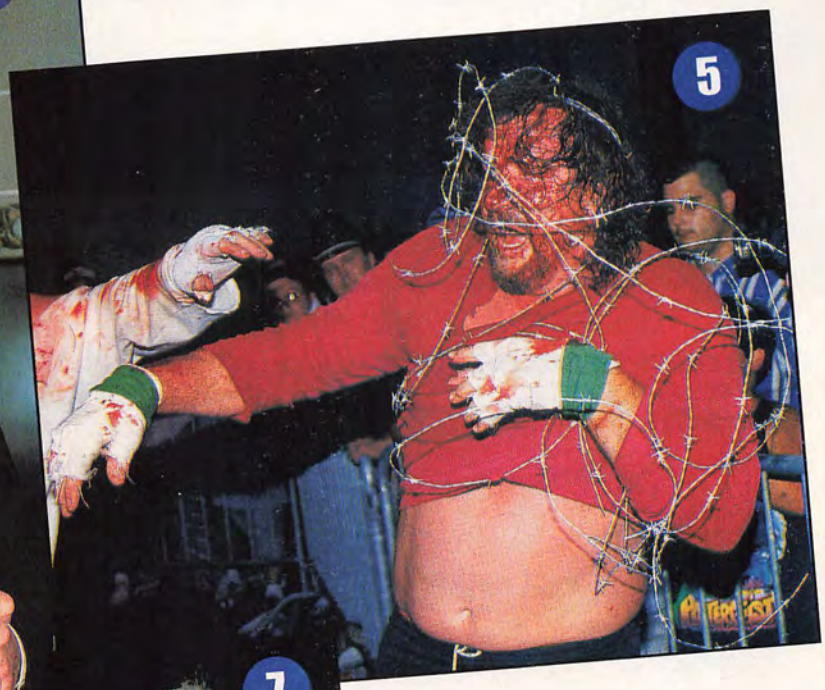




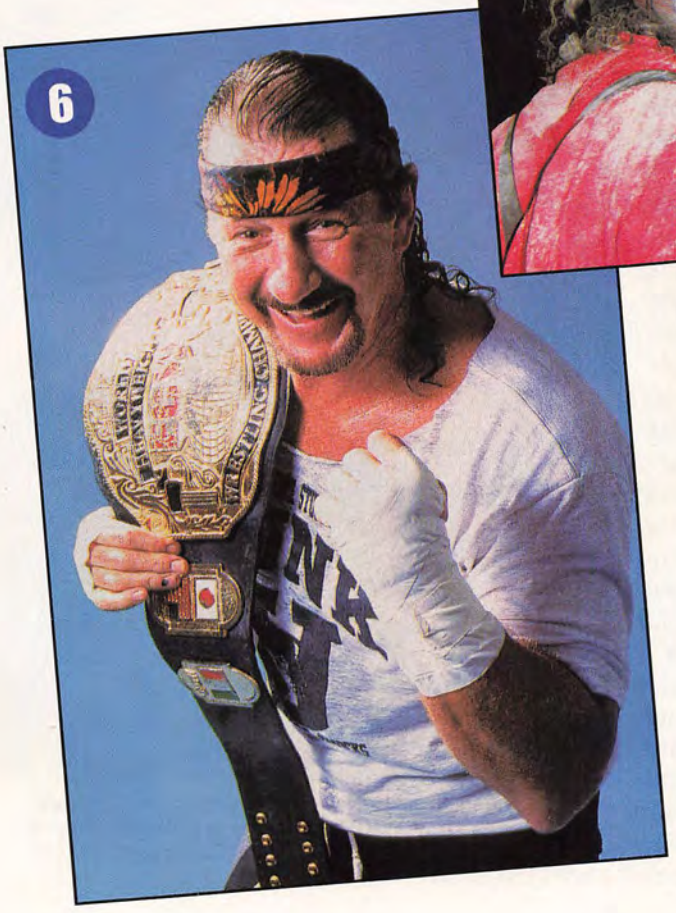
THE TERRY FUNK FILES

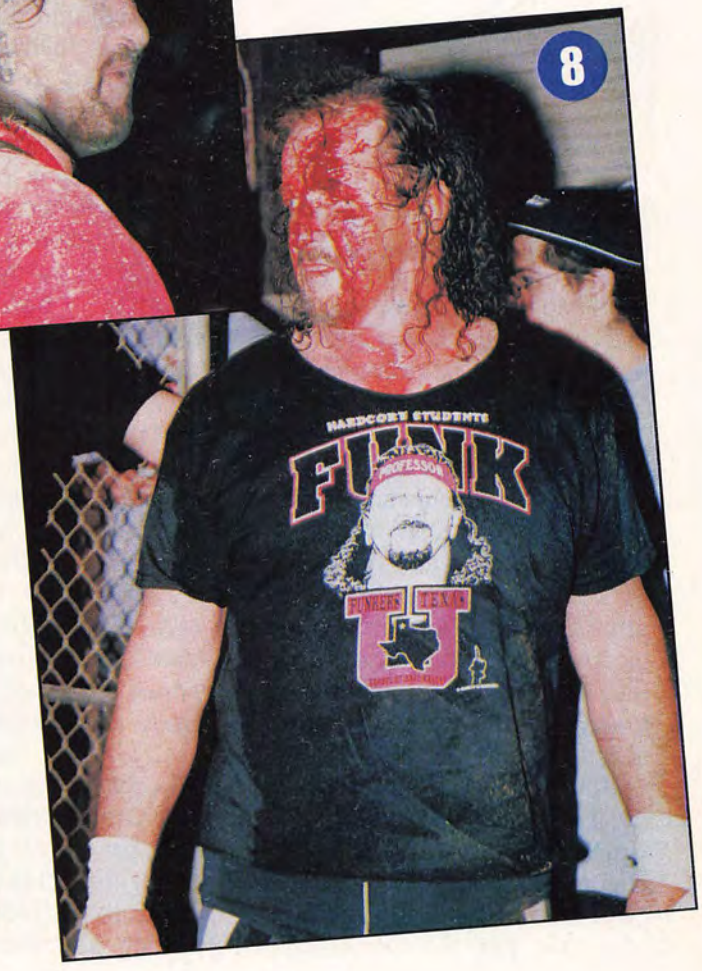
1—Way back when he was a blond (1967)
2—Darker hair, more menacing (1972)
3—Proud NWA World champion (1977)
4—Straight out of a horror flick? (1989)
5—All tangled up in ECW (1994)
6—ECW champion at age 53 (1997)
7—Chainsaw Charlie, his forgotten WWF alter-ego (1999)
8—Might never retire ... or stop bleeding (2002)

4


5

7


6

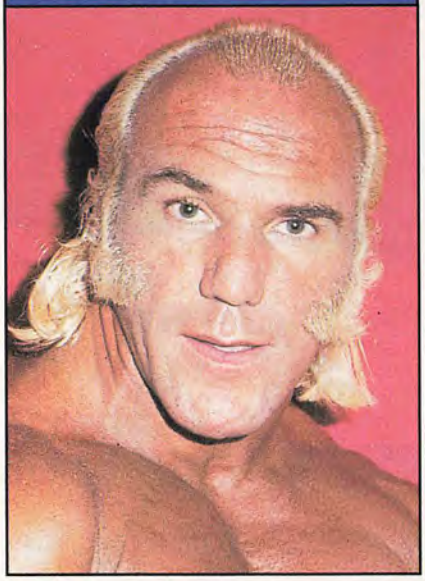

8
HARDCORE STUDENTS
FUNK
PROFESSOR
FUNKER'S
TEXAS

the wrestling observer

hall of fame

In each issue, *PWI* will honor one member of the *Wrestling observer* Hall of Fame, which we recognize as the sport's official Hall of Fame

SUPERSTAR GRAHAM



BILLY GRAHAM remembers it like it was yesterday.

He was planning his 1986 WWF comeback with Vince McMahon in Titan Tower headquarters when the boss summed up Graham's career in one neat sentence.

"Superstar, the only problem you had in pro wrestling was that you were ahead of your time."

How right he was!

Superstar Graham's impact is unmistakable, and his bulging biceps, bleached hair, and outrageous wardrobe inspired so many, including Hulk Hogan, Jesse Ventura, and Scott Steiner.

Born Wayne Coleman, Graham got his start in wrestling in Stu Hart's Calgary territory after a successful amateur bodybuilding career. He was blessed with charisma and the look—at 6'4" and a virtually fat-free 275 pounds—of a superstar. When he debuted in the U.S., he was billed as the youngest member of the famed wrestling Graham brothers.

Graham, recently ranked number seven by *PWI* on the all-time "WWE 400," manhandled the competition with an arsenal of power moves, each designed to showcase his "22-inch pythons." He played the role of the arrogant heel in battles with the likes of Verne Gagne, Dusty Rhodes, and Billy Robinson, but he broke the traditional bad guy mold by building a cult following (much like Roddy Piper, Randy Savage, and Steve Austin would in later years). He worked up the audience by tearing off tie-dyed T-shirts before matches and posing for the crowd after each victory, a routine the "Hulkster" later made famous.

After strong stints in the AWA and NWA, Graham moved on to the WWWF, for Vince McMahon Sr. envisioned big things for the Arizona native.

Graham was paired with manager The Grand Wizard, and on April 30, 1977, he achieved the unthinkable by pinning Sammartino to win that World championship. He held the World title for 10 months, making him the longest-reigning heel WWWF champion in history, and defended against top contenders such as Chief Jay Strongbow, Gorilla Monsoon, and Mil Mascaras. Fans flocked to Madison Square Garden and other venues to see his matches against Sammartino, Bob Backlund, and Dusty Rhodes, hoping the blond Adonis would be stripped of the gold.

Graham also became the first WWWF champion to face an

Bruno Sammartino was a powerhouse, but Superstar Graham was just a little stronger at times—strong enough and wily enough to beat "Da Brune" for the WWWF title in 1977.

Graham used classic heel tactics (feet on the ropes during a pinfall attempt) and almost pinned NWA champ Harley Race in a 1978 WWWF-NWA title unification match that ended in a draw.

The amazing strength of Graham was on full display when he caught Dusty Rhodes in an energy-sapping bearhug.

NWA champ in a title-unification match, wrestling Harley Race to a draw.

In the end, it was Backlund—Graham's polar opposite—who ended his title reign on February 20, 1978. The match was not without controversy, though, as the referee failed to notice Graham's leg on the bottom rope during the pin.

Four years later, a very different Graham returned from a long hiatus to challenge Backlund. He had abandoned his flashy tie-dyed outfits, shaved his head, and dressed in martial arts gear.

It was a risky move, but Graham had changed with the times. Once again, he was ahead of the curve.

However, hard times were in store for him. Like many bodybuilders in the 1960s and 1970s, Graham owed his Herculean physique in part to steroids. At the time, the consequences of steroid abuse were largely unknown. By the time Graham learned what he was doing to his body, the damage was already done.

Graham suffered severe degeneration of his skeletal system and has undergone numerous hip replacement and several follow-up surgeries. He also contracted hepatitis C and became a passionate crusader against steroid use. Graham had been working on writing his autobiography when he was placed on the waiting list to receive a new liver from a qualified donor (which he got).

The 1996 *Wrestling Observer* Hall of Fame inductee remains a fan today and thanks his Christian faith for helping him endure the pain his ailments have caused. He hopes his experiences will prevent future generations of athletes from making the same "foolish decisions" regarding steroids that he did. □

Four years after he lost the WWWF title to Bob Backlund, Graham returned to the company with a meaner look. The devious Grand Wizard was back at his side.

independent roundup

By Liz Hunter

PAUL LONDON BECAME the breakout independent star of 2003 by winning this year's edition of the prestigious ECWA Super 8 Tournament in Wilmington, Delaware by defeating **Chance Beckett** in the finals on April 5. London had already defeated **Alex Arion** in the quarterfinals, and **Frankie Kazarian** in the semifinals. He has emerged from the relative obscurity of the Texas independents to become one of the most popular wrestlers in the Philadelphia-based Ring of Honor promotion. He built his reputation by winning gauntlet matches and through his use of a stunning shooting star press. Still, London had yet to capture a major independent title ... but now he has the most coveted American independent title to his name. London's performance was most remarkable because this young aerialist had undergone emergency nasal surgery just three weeks prior to the tournament.

Even given London's showing, he cannot be labeled the MVP of the tournament. That distinction goes to Chance Beckett. This unknown commodity bravely fought through the event with a nasty, bloody gash on his chin that was a result of a superkick from **Sedrick Strong** in the first round. Beckett refused to be taken out of the tournament and basically taped his face back together for each match. The loss of blood added to his exhaustion during the final match, and Beckett succumbed to a submission hold known as the torture device.

Also on the card, ECWA heavyweight champion **Christopher Daniels** faced quite a different challenger in **The Japanese Pool Boy**. While Pool Boy is more known for his flashy entrances than his flashy moves, he is the Mid-Atlantic champion for the promotion. Despite the vast difference in experience, Pool Boy was able to hold his own against Daniels and even sway Daniels from his usual intense game. Although Daniels was victorious, Pool Boy emerged with a greater respect from the fans.

Speaking of Daniels, his **Prophecy** group in Ring of Honor is in shambles. Within a week in March, Daniels and **Xavier** lost the ROH tag title to **A.J. Styles** and **Red** in Boston and then in Philadelphia, **Samoa Joe** steamrolled Xavier to take the ROH heavyweight title. The Prophecy's biggest challenge has almost finalized in the form of **The Group**, which includes **C.W. Anderson**, Samoa Joe, and **Michael Shane**. The final piece of The Group is rumored to be Daniels' arch-rival, **Steve Corino**, but Corino has yet to appear with the others.

This year's Super 8 winner, Paul London, had to overcome a lot to become the best of the 2003 tournament. He didn't lose quite as much blood as the man he beat in the finals, Chance Beckett, but he showed just as much heart.

The Canadian Wrestling Federation has suspended **Spyder**. He was also stripped of the NWA Canadian title. **Justin Tyme**, **Maxx Logan**, **Baron Von Meaner**, and referee **Johnny Fatterson** have all been released from the CWF as well.

In other NWA news, **Alvin Minnick** of the NWA Mid-South group has resigned from his post on the Board of Directors. Both Minnick and the promotion remain members of the NWA. NWA Wildside head **Bill Behrens** will be filling the vacancy.

Thomas Keister, the

Samoa Joe defeated Xavier to win the Ring of Honor title in Philadelphia in March. His next goal in ROH is to destroy the rest of a group called The Prophecy.

CEO of Indiana's Commonwealth Championship Wrestling, has been named Indiana's honorary co-chairman for the National Republican Party National Business Advisory Council. Thomas will attend special sessions of Congress this summer to address small business policies and meet with **President Bush** as well.

In a footnote to the **Shawn Michaels** Honor Society story on page 42, Michael Shane recently signed an exclusive deal with the Japan-based Yamax Corporation and has just completed a successful tour of All-Japan.

Xtreme Pro Wrestling's parent company, Xtreme Associates, was raided by the FBI and postal inspectors on April 8. The 10-page warrant asked for the seizure of records, videos, and model releases for five adult movies produced by the company. The seizure was based upon a complaint filed in Pittsburgh. XPW cancelled its Pittsburgh shows and has postponed its DirecTV pay-per-view date until sometime in July.

Southern States Wrestling celebrated its 12th anniversary with a show in Kingsport, Tennessee. **Ray Idol** won the "Great 8" Rumble to top off the card ... Border City Wrestling has now become Maximum Pro Wrestling in order to expand its territory. Apparently, Border City is too regional for future expansion plans ... Several promotions have added TV shows, including Major League Wrestling's *Underground* show, which is syndicated nationally, and River City Wrestling's locally syndicated show in San Antonio, Texas.

Quick title changes: Keystone Championship Wrestling, March 29: **Dave Daniels** and **Xander Graves** defeated tag team champs **Jay Scott** and **Bobby Shields** for the title ... **Sebastian** beat **Kasanova Kato** and heavyweight champ **Big Lenny** in a "Highway To Hell" triangle match to win the title ... ***Premier Wrestling Federation, March 28:*** **Alexis Laree** pinned **Simply Luscious** to become the first PWF universal women's champion ... ***UCW, March 22:*** **Joel Davis** defeated **Gary Gold** to win the TV title ... **Todd Hansen** and **Beau Douglas** beat **Don Vega** and **Chris Blackheart** to win the tag team title ... ***Wild Championship Wrestling Outlaws, March 29:*** **Kenny Courageous** and **Jason Vega** defeated **Skip Raddison** and **T.J. Stryker** to win the tag team title ... ***Dark Horse Wrestling, March 22:*** **Stryc-9** pinned **Tony Scarpone** to become the inaugural midstate champion ... ***Heartland Wrestling Association, March 25:*** **Chet Jablonski** and **Cody Hawk** beat tag team champs **Matt Stryker** and **B.J. Whitmer** to win the title ... ***PACW, March 22:*** **The Hot Bodies** defeated **Team USA** to become the new tag team champions ... ***Eastern Wrestling Alliance, March 22:*** **Cueball** pinned **Antonio Thomas** to become the New England champion ... **Steve Ramsey** defeated **John Walters** to become the heavyweight champion ... ***All Star Wrestling Federation, March 22:*** **Titanic** beat heavyweight champion **Jeremy James** for the title ... ***Buffalo Championship Wrestling, March 22:*** **Steve Kruz** defeated **Troy Buchannan** for the TV title ... ***Fusion Pro Wrestling, March 22:*** **Kid Krush** and **Nick Neighborhood** defeated **Steve Hunter** and **Zeke Beecher** to win the tag team title ... **Hoss** beat **Punk** to win the heavyweight title... ***IWF, March 22:*** **Kevin Knight** pinned **Biggie Biggs** to become the new heavyweight champion ... ***Tornado Lucha Libre, March 21:*** Oklahoma TV champion **Sonny C** and Oklahoma champion **Rocco Valentino** wrestled to a no-contest in the third match of their best-of-three series to unify the title ... ***Ultimate Pro Wrestling, March 15:*** **The Ballard Brothers** defeated **The Thrillaz** for the tag team title ... ***Xtreme Championship Wrestling, March 21:*** **Chuy Lopez** and **Krusher Kong** defeated **Jeff** and **Jerry Brown** to become the new tag team champions ... **Scott Phoenix** defeated **Pendragon** to become the new iron-man champion ... **Epi the Phat Samoan** pinned **Mike Foxx** to become the first TV champion ... ***American Championship Wrestling Alliance, March 15:*** **C.J. Summers** defeated **Hadrian** for the heavyweight championship ... ***Mega Championship Wrestling, March 15:*** **J-Ru** and **Glenn Spectre** defeated **Klub X-treme** to win the tag team title. □

the international report

With Mike Spillane

HIROMICHI "KODO" FUYUKI'S death from cancer at the age of 42 was almost as peculiar as his storied career in *puroresu.* Just days before his passing, Fuyuki was challenging **Shinya Hashimoto** for a shot at the Triple Crown, claiming it might be the last match of his career. Fuyuki, never known in the press for his honesty, was thought by some to be making a joke. Then, eight days later, he died at Yokohama City Hospital.

Fuyuki was diagnosed with cancer in April of last year, and had one of his many retirement matches in the wake of his diagnosis. He spent the last year of his life in and out of hospitals (when he wasn't dealing with the business of World Entertainment Wrestling, the company of which he was president). The WEW group was more or less a carbon copy of the latter-day FMW, for which Fuyuki had served as head matchmaker.

Hiromichi "Kodo" Fuyuki (shown against Terry Funk), one of the stranger people in the world of *puroresu* in recent times, succumbed to cancer at age 42 in March. It happened just days after he issued a challenge to All-Japan Triple Crown champ Shinya Hashimoto.

To many fans, Fuyuki was little more than a comedic figure during the days of FMW's downward tumble toward oblivion. Notorious for negating stipulations from matches a week after they happened and booking shocking angles in place of engaging storylines, Fuyuki surrounded himself with controversy. His **Team No Respect** once made headlines by urinating on the company's figurehead president.

Long before that, Fuyuki was half of **The Footloose**, a tag team he comprised with **Toshiaki Kawada** in the 1980s under the banner of **Giant Baba's** All-Japan Pro Wrestling. He later made a name for himself as a singles wrestler in SWS and WAR before landing in FMW, where he gained a different type of fame.

His match with Hashimoto was scheduled to take place in the parking lot of the former Kawasaki Stadium (which was recently demolished), the site of FMW's most famous matches. Hashimoto had just won the Triple Crown from AJPW's **Keiji Muto** when Fuyuki, against doctor's orders, left the hospital to appear on a Zero-One show and issue the challenge. **Kintaro Kanemura** was slated to wrestle in place of Fuyuki as a farewell to WEW's deceased president.

Lucha Libre fans that get their weekly fix of EMLL and AAA on Galavision (available in many parts of the United States) will be pleased to learn that both promotions have inked new agreements with the television network. In recent months, the Galavision block of wrestling had been playing reruns from 2002, even though tapings continued without interruption. Galavision executives had thought about giving Lucha the ax, but finally decided to keep the programming, and will have begun airing current episodes of EMLL and AAA by the time you read this.

The biggest single change in the Lucha landscape since reruns began airing on Galavision concerns **Shocker**. At the time new episodes stopped airing, Shocker had become EMLL's most popular *technico,* with a higher profile and greater popularity than he had ever enjoyed. Since then, Shocker has turned *rudo,* and even teams with former rivals **Ultimo Guerrero** and **Rey Bucanero** now, drawing the ire of Mexican fans. This will prove to be a surprise when EMLL television resumes.

For some time, the trio of Guerrero, Bucanero and **Tarzan Boy (Los Infiernos del Ring)** has been Mexico's hottest commodity. The three *rudos* were consis-

tent main-event players everywhere they went, and the group seemed destined for international fame. However, when calls to travel abroad came, it seemed that Tarzan Boy was left out of the mix. Bucanero and Guerrero ended up in Toryumon and New Japan without the third Infierno. After weeks of speculation, Tarzan Boy was released from EMLL for "personal reasons" and has all but vanished from the Lucha scene.

Chris Hero, an independent standout based in the Midwest, has been touring Europe off and on for several years. His most recent visit overseas saw him capture the WXW (Germany) championship in a hard-fought contest with **Martin Nolte**. Thanks to his occasional visits, Hero has garnered a solid following through Austria, the Netherlands, and several other European nations. While American wrestlers have always crossed over to the British scene without much difficulty, Hero's popularity and success in countries in which he does not even speak the native language make for a good story.

There has never been less fanfare for a Champion's Carnival than this year's incarnation of the classic tournament. In the first Carnival since the departure of **Motoko Baba** (founder Giant Baba's widow) from All-Japan, **Satoshi Kojima** emerged victorious over **Arashi** in the end. Ordinarily, this would be big news throughout the wrestling world, but the tournament featured so many "B" list wrestlers, and was thrown together so haphazardly, that only the most ardent *puroresu* fans even knew who all the participants were. The Carnival concluded before a half-full house in Sapporo. Declining interest in All-Japan and the proliferation of other promotions in the Orient has triggered more talk of the company shutting down.

All-Japan isn't the only company that has been down on its luck lately. Perennial rival New Japan Pro Wrestling hasn't come close to matching its attendance numbers from just a few years ago. Interest in the promotion is so low that **Antonio Inoki**, the company's founder, has publicly admitted he is considering changing the name of the group and starting fresh. Inoki remains a strong proponent of mixed martial arts contests, and his influence has brought numerous MMA stars into pro wrestling, and vice versa. Unfortunately for New Japan, its wrestlers have not had much luck adjusting to martial arts competition, and bouts featuring top stars like **Jushin Liger** and **Yuji Nagata** have mostly ended in disaster for the wrestlers.

Pro Wrestling NOAH, on the other hand, has seen attendance figures leap since **Kenta Kobashi** captured the Global Honored Crown from **Mitsuharu Misawa**. Kobashi's long string of knee surgeries has been well-documented over the years, and many doctors have advised Kobashi never to wrestle again. At times, Kobashi's mobility has been so limited by his recurring injuries that he has been incapable of climbing stairs. None of this stopped him from wrestling what ended up being an all-time classic of a match against his sometimes-partner/sometimes-rival Misawa.

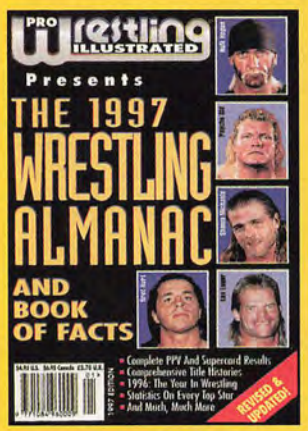
In what Misawa has said will be the final singles confrontation between the two, Kobashi won his first GHC title, exhausting his repertoire of moves—from the dreaded burning hammer to his signature lariat—in the process. At one point, it looked like the match might end on the floor of Budokan Hall. Misawa threw Kobashi from the rampway onto the arena floor with a Tiger suplex, and there were several tense moments before either wrestler began moving again. Once they made it back into the ring, the contest went back and forth as the admiring crowd was whipped into a frenzy. Eventually, the younger Kobashi overwhelmed Misawa and made history by taking the pinfall and the championship. □

It was good news/bad news for Satoshi Kojima this spring. The good was that he won All-Japan's Champion's Carnival with some impressive performances. The bad was that interest in the event hit an all-time low.

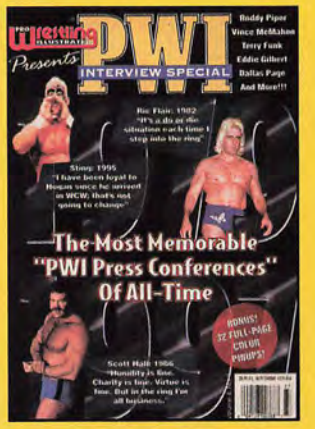
>WRESTLING COLLECTORS!

Do you know what you're missing?

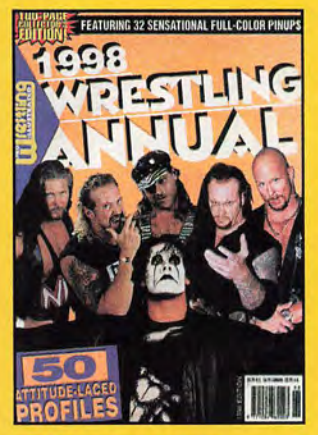
WE HAVE LIMITED REMAINING SUPPLIES ON SOME OF THE MOST POPULAR ISSUES LONDON PUBLISHING HAS EVER PRODUCED! ORDER NOW—BEFORE THEY'RE ALL GONE!



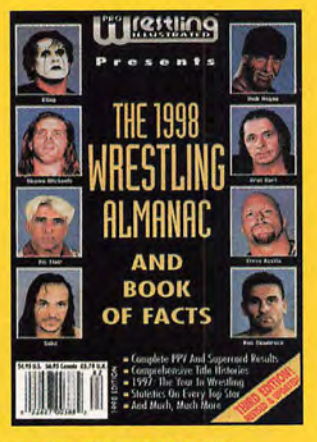
1997 WRESTLING ALMANAC
The authoritative wrestling reference tool. Complete PPV and supercard results. Title histories. 1996 in history. Stats. Digest-sized. 196 pages!



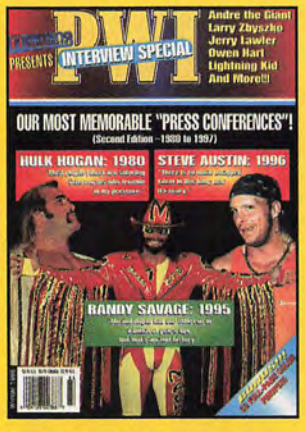
PWI INTERVIEW SPECIAL (Vol. I)
One select "Press Conference" since 1979, *PWI's* first year. Scott Hall, Bruno Sammartino, Dallas Page, Kevin Von Erich, Ric Flair, and more! 32 color pinups!



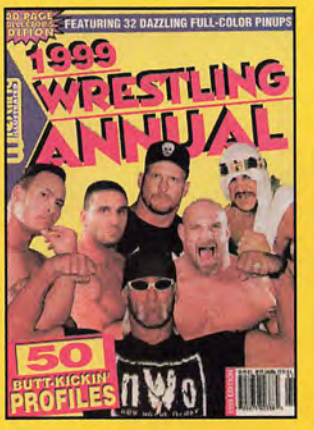
1998 WRESTLING ANNUAL
Butt-kickin', attitude-laced profiles, plus a look at what the future holds for wrestling's top superstars. 32 color pinups!


Pro Wrestling Illustrated Presents
THE 1998 WRESTLING ALMANAC
AND BOOK OF FACTS
Complete PPV And Supercard Results
Comprehensive Title Histories
1997: The Year In Wrestling
Statistics On Every Top Star
And Much, Much More
THIRD EDITION

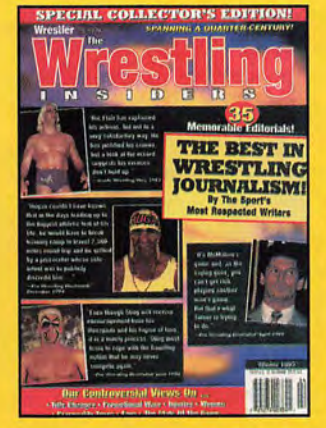
1998 WRESTLING ALMANAC
Our third edition, including updates on every section, plus a comprehensive look back on 1997. Digest-sized, 196 pages.



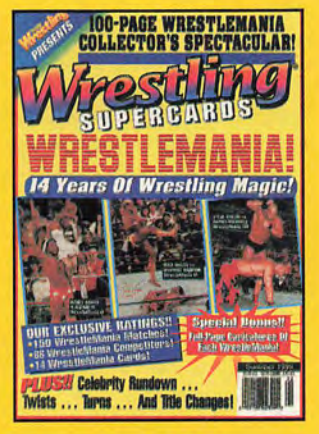
PWI INTERVIEW SPECIAL (Vol. II)
One "Press Conference" for each year since 1980, including Hogan, Andre, Cactus, Austin, Sting, and more! 32 color pinups!



1999 WRESTLING ANNUAL
More cutting-edge profiles of the stars, including a glimpse into their futures. 32 color pinups!



WRESTLING INSIDERS (Winter '99)
Go back through the years with wrestling's most respected columnists, including Dan Shocket, Eddie Ellner, and Stu Saks.



WRESTLING SUPERCARDS
A historical look at WrestleMania! Ranking all 150 matches, 88 competitors, and the first 14 WrestleMania cards. 32 color pages.

- ☐ 1997 Wrestling Almanac
- ☐ PWI Interview Special (Vol. I)
- ☐ 1998 Wrestling Annual
- ☐ 1998 Wrestling Almanac
- ☐ PWI Interview Special (Vol. II)
- ☐ 1999 Wrestling Annual
- ☐ 1999 Wrestling Insiders (Winter '99)
- ☐ Wrestling Supercards
- ☐ PWI Interview Special (Vol. III)
- ☐ 1999 Wrestling Yearbook
- ☐ 2000 Wrestling Almanac
- ☐ Wrestling Insiders (Spring 2000)
- ☐ 2000 Wrestling Annual
- ☐ PWI Interview Special (Vol. IV)
- ☐ Wrestling Insiders (Fall 2000)
- ☐ 2002 Wrestling Almanac

Please send the collector's issues I have indicated at left! I have enclosed $7 per issue as payment in full (postage included) or provided my credit card number to charge my purchase ($20 minimum please). Send to:

London Publishing Co., P.O. Box 910, Ft. Washington, PA 19034

Name_____

Address_____

City_____ **State**_____ **Zip**_____

Please indicate method of payment:

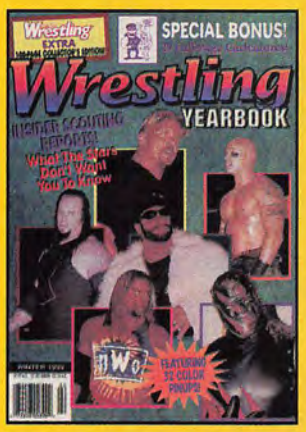
- ☐ Check or money order (enclosed and payable to London Publishing Co.)
- ☐ Visa #_____
- ☐ MasterCard #_____

Expiration Date:_____/_____ (MO / YR)

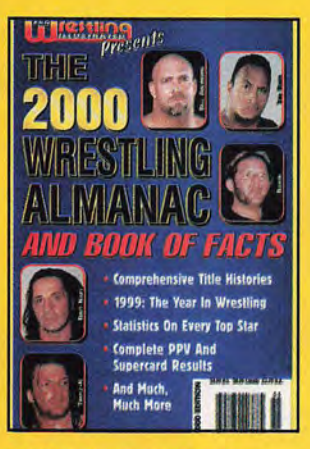
Signature:_____

For all orders outside the U.S., you must add $1.50 for every issue to be sent surface mail, and $3 for every issue to be sent airmail. International money orders in U.S. funds only. Please allow 6-8 weeks for delivery.

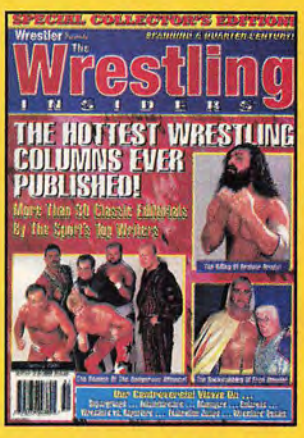
PWI INTERVIEW SPECIAL (Vol. III)
One "Press Conference" for each year since 1980, including Michaels, Sting, Flair, Ventura, Kimberly, Blassie, Luger, and more! 32 color pinups!



1999 WRESTLING YEARBOOK
We turn loose caricaturist Jason Conlan one more time (whether his subjects like it or not!). 30 scouting reports. 32 color pinups!


Wrestling Presents
THE 2000 WRESTLING ALMANAC
AND BOOK OF FACTS
Comprehensive Title Histories
1999: The Year In Wrestling
Statistics On Every Top Star
Complete PPV And Supercard Results
And Much, Much More

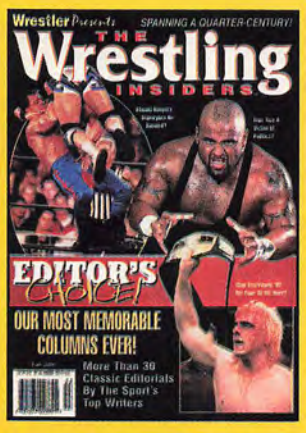
2000 WRESTLING ALMANAC
Our fifth edition includes a history of multi-federation champs, plus updates of our regular Almanac contents. Expanded to 228 pages!



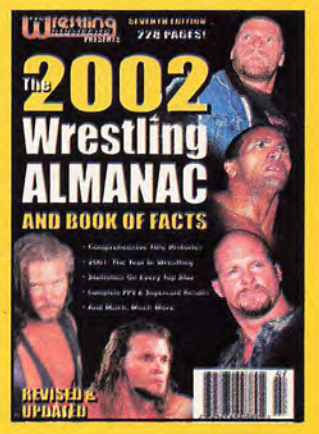
WRESTLING INSIDERS (Spring 2000)
Relive a generation of wrestling through the eyes of London Publishing's highly respected columists, our second edition in the series.

2000 WRESTLING ANNUAL
Our editors sharpen their pens and write up the wrestlers who will make a difference in the sport in Y2k. 32 color pinups!

PWI INTERVIEW SPECIAL (Vol. IV)
One "Press Conference" for each year since 1981, including Flair, Austin & Pillman, J.R., Scott Steiner, and Bret Hart. 32 color pinups!



WRESTLING INSIDERS (Fall 2000)
Titles, holds and maneuvers, supercards, tag teams, hall of famers, the state of the game. You want our opinion? Buy the magazine!



2002 WRESTLING ALMANAC
The seventh annual edition updates our historical records and takes a look back at the year 2001.

arena reports

We encourage promoters and fans to send results to:
"Arena Reports," c/o Pro Wrestling Illustrated, Box 1148, Ft. Washington, PA 19034
Fax results to **(215) 540-0146.**
E-mail results to **PWIQueen@aol.com.**

Spotlight Card of the Month

POTTSTOWN, PA—Premier Wrestling Federation at Academy Hall: **Joel** & **Jose Maximo** defeated **Homicide** & **Brian XL** ... **Samoa Joe** defeated **Greg Spitz** ... **Chris Hamrick** beat **Dewey Cheatum** ... **Chi Chi Cruz** & **Chris Divine** beat **Da Hit Squad** ... **Mikey Whipwreck** beat **Red** ... **Rockin' Rebel** defeated **Rapid Fire Maldonado** in a loser-waves-the-flag match ... Zero-One/NWA/UPW junior heavyweight champion **Low-Ki** defeated **Quiet Storm** ... **Josh Daniels** & **Matt Striker** beat **Joey Matthews** & **Jack Victory** ... PWF TV champion **C.W. Anderson** defeated PWF U.S. champion **Christopher Daniels** to unify the two titles as the TV championship ... **Steve Corino** defeated PWF universal heavyweight champion **Justin Credible** to win the title.
(03-16-03)

—"Spotlight" photos by Joe Zanolle

Double-teaming is what the brothers Maximo do best in the ring. The S.A.T. overwhelmed Brian XL with many innovative moves and rolled on to a victory over him and Homicide.

UNITED STATES

ALABAMA

BIRMINGHAM—WWE at Boutwell Auditorium: **Brock Lesnar** defeated **The Big Show** ... Cruiserweight champion **Matt Hardy** beat **Billy Kidman** ... **Nathan Jones** defeated **Kanyon** ... **Rhyno** pinned **John Cena** ... **Rey Misterio Jr.** defeated **Jamie Noble** ... Smackdown tag team champions **Shelton Benjamin** & **Charlie Haas** beat **Eddie** & **Chavo Guerrero Jr.** by disqualification ... **Torrie Wilson** beat **Nidia** ... **Chris Benoit** defeated **A-Train**.
(03-08-03)

—Sam Sharp

ARKANSAS

HARRISBURG—All Star Wrestling at the National Guard Armory: **Hillbilly Nathan** defeated **J.T. West** by disqualification ... **New Blood** defeated **Kid Krazy** and **Midnight Special** in a three-way match ... **Ron Hohn** beat light heavyweight champion **Colt** by disqualification ... Tag team champs **Blaze of Fury** pinned **Ray Ray** & **Ice** ... ASWF champ **Titanic** pinned **Loose Cannon** ... **Doink the Clown** pinned **Sam Dollar**.
(03-29-03)

—Bryan Underwood

CALIFORNIA

SANTA MARIA—California Wrestling Alliance at the Santa Maria Boys and Girls Club: **Jack Danielz** beat **Jin Hiryu** ... **Cannon** beat hardcore champion **Sunami** to win the belt ... **Dante** defeated hardcore champion **Cannon** to win the belt ... **Nikki, Big Ugly,** & **James Choi** beat **Larry Blackwell, James Watkins,** & **Jack Daulton** ... **Bo Cooper** beat **Psycho Seth** ... **Shane** & **Shannon Ballard** beat **The X Foundation** ... **Jon Jon** pinned **Kid Omega** in a gauntlet match to win the vacant light heavyweight belt ... Tag team champs **Parental Discretion** beat **Off Da Hook** ... International champion **Billy Blade** pinned **Mike Sanders**.
(03-09-03)

—Gregg Milton

DELAWARE

LAUREL—Maryland Championship Wrestling's "Jay Caldwell Memorial Show" at the High School: Cruiserweight champion **2-Dope** defeated **Lucid Fury** ... **Doug Delicious** defeated **Jason Stone** ... **Curtis Patrick** pinned **Genesis** ... **Lucifer** beat **Derek Wayne** ... **Mark** & **Jay Briscoe** beat **Brandon Mercury** & **Aidan Chambers** ... Tag team champions **Chad Bowman** and **Dino Divine** won a triangle elimination match over the teams of **Crazy Shay** & **Chris Nightmare** and **The Holy Rollers** ... Rage TV champion **Joey Matthews** pinned **Scott Pain** ... **Alexis Laree** defeated **Angela** ... **Buff Bagwell, Van Hammer,** & **The Briscoe Brothers** defeated **Billy Redwood, The Bruiser, Brock Singleton,** & **Romeo Valentino**.
(03-08-03)

—Timothy A. Walker

FLORIDA

TAMPA—WWE at the USF Sun Dome: **Brock Lesnar** beat **John Cena** ... **Rikishi** pinned **Jamie Noble** ... Cruiserweight champion **Matt Hardy** beat **Rey Misterio Jr.** ... Smackdown tag team champions **Shelton Benjamin** & **Charlie Haas** beat **Eddie** & **Chavo Guerrero Jr.** ... **Rhyno** beat **Kanyon** ... **Tajiri** pinned **Bill DeMott** ... **Brian Kendrick, Sean O'Haire,** & **Sgt. Slaughter** beat **Nunzio, Chuck Palumbo,** & **Johnny Stamboli** ... **Torrie Wilson** beat **Nidia** in a bra and panties match ... **Nathan Jones** & **The Undertaker** beat **A-Train** & **The Big Show**.
(03-16-03)

—Harry Burkett

MIAMI—WWE at the American Airlines Arena: **Rikishi** pinned **Bill DeMott** ... **Tajiri** pinned **Jamie Noble** ... **Brian Kendrick, Sean O'Haire,** & **Sgt. Slaughter** beat **Chuck Palumbo, Nunzio,** & **Johnny Stamboli** ... **Rhyno** pinned **Kanyon** ... Cruiserweight champion **Matt Hardy** defeated **Rey Misterio Jr.** ... **Nathan Jones** & **The Undertaker** beat **A-Train** & **The Big Show** ... Smackdown tag team champions **Shelton Benjamin** & **Charlie Haas** beat **Eddie** & **Chavo Guerrero Jr.** ... **Torrie Wilson** beat **Nidia** ... **The Rock** pinned **Brock Lesnar**.
(03-15-03)

—George Dishong

GEORGIA

CORNELIA—NWA Wildside at the NWA Arena: **Onyx** beat **Masada** ... **Dory Funk Jr.** & **Adam Windsor** beat **Mikal Adrian** & **Vincent I. Pain** ... **Jorge Estrada** beat **Jason Cross** to retain the NWA North American title ... **Rainman** beat **Jeremy V** to retain the TV title ... **David Young** beat **Bull Buchanan** ... **Jesse Taylor** beat

Eddie Golden ... **Todd Sexton** beat **Jimmy Rave** in a 15-minute "Ironman" match ... **Iceberg** beat **Stone Mountain** in a steel cage match to retain the heavyweight title.
(03-29-03)

—Larry Goodman

CORNELIA—NWA Wildside at the NWA Arena: **Jeff Lewis** defeated **Shadow Jackson** ... **Gabriel** defeated **Kid Kool** in an "Ironman" match ... **Jason Blackman** defeated **Scottie Wrenn** in a falls-count-anywhere match ... **Todd Sexton** defeated **Jeremy V** in a Texas death match ... **Jeff Lewis**, **Todd Sexton**, **Scottie Wrenn**, & **Kid Kool** defeated **Shadow Jackson**, **Jason Blackman**, **Jeremy V**, & **Gabriel** in an elimination match.
(03-07-03)

—Maria Berry

TRION—Roughhouse Championship Wrestling at the RCW Building: Cruiserweight champion **C.C. Devlin** beat **Condom Man** ... U.S. champion **Scott Prater** defeated **Adam McGraw** ... **Alex Summers** beat **Slip Knot** ... **John Arden**, **Billy Love**, & **Mark Pain** beat **The Wall**, **Michael Cross**, & **Mr. X** ... Tag team champions **Jacob Hayes** & **Cody Rose** beat **Kenny Arden** & **Frenchy Riviera** ... **Billy Montana** beat **Déjà Vu** in a lumberjack match.
(03-22-03)

—Jennifer Duran

FORT VALLEY—All-Star Wrestling Network at the AWN Arena: **Danny Horne** beat **Bryan Fury** ... **Mike Payne** defeated **Sam Slaughter** ... **Ash** defeated **The Bounty Hunter** ... **Mr. Fort Valley** defeated **Bonecrusher** by disqualification ... **Jerry Thompson** & **Whiskey River** defeated **Rowdy** & **Tommy 2 Much** ... **Cosmic Jammer** beat heavyweight champion **Neil Douglas** and **Pit Bull** in a three-way dance to win the title.
(03-08-03)

—Dave Whitaker

ILLINOIS

HERRIN—Attitude Championship Wrestling at the Civic Center: **Black Death** beat hardcore champ **Trent Dozer** by disqualification ... **Ice Cold Outlaw** defeated **Kid Dragon** ... **Bull Hurley** beat **Myzery** and **Big Bubba Floyd** in a three-way match ... Light heavyweight champion **Strafe** pinned **Wraith** ... Hardcore champ **Trent Dozer** defeated **Lucky Dane** ... **Bull Hurley** defeated North American champion **Tommy Striker** to win the title ... Heavyweight champion **Tommy Callaway** beat **Ax Stevens** in a 30-minute "Ironman" match.
(03-29-03)

—Brad Smithson

FARINA—National Wrestling Coalition at South Central Elementary: **Timber** pinned **Ice Cold Outlaw** ... **Tommy Striker** & **Ax Stevens** beat **Tommy Callaway** & **Bull Hurley** ... Ladies champion **Lady Vendetta** wrestled to a double-disqualification with **Moonpuppy** ... **George the Animal Jr.** beat **Shuto the Ninja** ... **Lucky Dane** defeated **Kid Dragon** ... Heavyweight champion **Brian the Lion** beat **T-Bolt Baxton**.
(03-22-03)

—Brad Smithson

SPRINGFIELD—New Midwest Wrestling at the USA Sports Center*: **In first-round matches of the tag team title tournament:** **Scotty Cash** & **Doug Fraze** defeated **Eric Logan** & **Stan Sallinger** by disqualification ... **Christian Haze** & **Tony Angel** defeated **The Agency** ... **Garret Ryan** & **Toga Steve** beat **Steven Bishop** & **Lucious P. Cotrain** ... **Sage Ramsey** & **Jason Wells** beat **Tom Arson** & **Bradley Stephens** ... **In non-tournament matches:** Central Illinois champion **El Diablo Silverado** pinned **Bing Westlake III** ... **Michael Shard** pinned **Chico Es Loco** ... **Real World Jeremy** pinned **Rip Mystic** ... Heavyweight champion **Guy Smith** pinned **Dredd Walker** ... **Dredd Walker** pinned **Guy Smith** in an immediate non-title rematch.
(03-22-03)

—Steven Lucas

VILLA GROVE—Dark Horse Wrestling at the DHW Arena: **Eric West** defeated **Zach Lawrence** ... **Wyldechylde** pinned **Bill E. Valentine** ... PCW champion **John Burke** pinned **The Big Don** ... **Adam Evans** pinned **Rudy Vallay** ... **Willie Richardson**, **Julian the Warlock**, & **J.J. Drake** defeated **The Feature Effect** ... Cruiserweight champion **Safari Stu** won a four-way elimination match over **The Roach**, **Acid Jaz**, and **Trik Davis** ... **Tristin Hayze** won a gauntlet match, defeating **9-Mil**, then **Jason Allen**, and then **Botch** by countout ... **Stryc-9** pinned **Tony Scarpone** to become the first midstate champion ... Heavyweight champion **Machine** won a triangle match over **Egotistical Fantastico** and **Boy Toy Bryan.**
(03-22-03)

—Mary Conway

Samoa Joe once described his style as "ground and pound," and he both grounded and pounded Greg Spitz quite a bit before finishing him off with an Island driver.

PEORIA—Next Generation Wrestling at the Peoria Athletic Club: Lightweight champion **Grendal** defeated **Jamie Tyrant** ... **Mr. Tickles the Clown** defeated **Denver Todd Stickrod** ... Tag team champs **Cody Cash** & **Johnny Justice** defeated **Scott Keyes** & **Bryon Michaels** ... **Deacon Hobbs** defeated **Justin MacIntyre** ... **Shane Griffin** defeated **Russ Stevens** ... **Big Pappa** beat **2 Damn Bad** ... **Big Pappa** defeated **Sinister** ... **Big Pappa** defeated **Jester** ... **Chris Hazard** defeated **Big Pappa**.
(03-15-03)

—Jason Pemberton

MOLINE—WWE at the Mark of the Quad Cities: **Jeff Hardy** defeated **Christian** ... **Maven** beat **Rico** ... **The Hurricane** beat **Rodney Mack** ... **D-Von** & **Spike Dudley** beat **Chief Morley** & **Lance Storm** in a table match ... Women's champion **Victoria** beat **Trish Stratus** and **Jazz** in a three-way match ... **Kane** & **Rob Van Dam** beat **Jamal** & **Rosey** ... **Chris Jericho** beat **Test** in a no-disqualification match ... **Goldust** pinned **Steven Richards** ... Raw champion **Triple-H** beat **Booker T**.
(03-14-03)

—Eddie Aames

INDIANA

INDIANAPOLIS—Wild Championship Wrestling Outlaws at the Ramada Inn: **Indiana Kidd Jr.** defeated **Mark Green** ... **Slappy the Clown** pinned **Kaleb Pierce** ... **The Country Boys** defeat **Mick Dundee** & **Antonio Perez** ... **Billy Bart** pinned **Rob Ramer** ... **Itch Coma Weider** defeated **Rob Kincaid** ... **Kenny Courageous** & **Jason Vega** defeated **Skip Raddison** & **T.J. Stryker** to win the tag team title ... **Johnny Blaze** defeated **Indiana Kidd Jr.** ... Heavyweight champ **Billy Roc** defeated **Don Basher**.
(03-29-03)

—Randy Klemme

LOGANSPORT—Wild Championship Wrestling Outlaws at the Knights of Columbus Hall: **Johnny Blaze** defeated **Hillbilly Jed** ... **Rob Kincaid** pinned **Skip Raddison** ... **D-Von Fury** defeated **E.Z.Cruz** ... **Kenny Courageous** defeated **Itch Coma Weider** ... Heavyweight champion **Billy Roc** defeated **Billy Bart** by reverse decision ... **Johnny Blaze** & **Dozer** defeated **Don Basher** & **Indiana Kidd Jr.**
(03-22-03)

—Randy Klemme

MILAN—Northern Wrestling Federation at the VFW Hall: Tri-State champion **Brian Beech** pinned **Tony Bryant** ... **Ryan Stone** pinned **Mack the Knife** ... **Sin D** pinned **Austin Meddler** ... Tag team champs **Chad Allegra** & **Jay Donaldson** defeated **The Zodiacs** ... **Jeff Davis** defeated **The Spoiler** by submission ... **Stamp Lickage** defeated **Dregen** ... **Jeff Davis** won a battle royal, last eliminating **The Zodiacs**.
(03-08-03)

—Kirk Sheppard

KENTUCKY

GEORGETOWN—Central Wrestling Alliance at the Country World Flea Market: **King Paul** beat **Redneck Superstar** ... **Billy Maverick** beat **Eric Draven** ... **J-Ice** won a three-way dance against **J.T. Money** and **Jimmy Lamb** ... **Bo Johnson**, **Jad T. Lungini**, & **Larry D** wrestled **Terry Alan**,

There are many words that could be used to describe Chris Hamrick's piledriver off the middle turnbuckle (executed here on Dewey Cheatum), but perhaps none is more appropriate than frightening.

Tommy Green, & **Syxe** to a no-contest ... **J.T. Money** won a 12-man battle royal.
(03-29-03)

—Myron Coulton

LOUISVILLE—Ohio Valley Wrestling at the OVW Arena: **Chris Cage** defeated **Mark Bell** ... **Nova** & **Mark Henry** defeated **Orlando Jordan** & **Mark Magnus** ... **Passion** defeated **Linda Miles** ... **Doug Basham** defeated **B.J. Payne** ... **Mark Jindrak** defeated **Alex Cross** ... **Faarooq** & **Bradshaw** defeated **Lance Cade** & **Rene Dupree**.
(03-26-03)

—Aaron Wilson

COVINGTON—Northern Wrestling Federation at the Madison Theater: **Dregen** defeated **Chad Allegra** ... **Mark Manson** defeated **Justen Idol** ... **Brian Beech** defeated **Ryan Stone** ... **Psycho Sam** defeated **Ray Steele** ... **Stamp Lickage** defeated **Matt Parks** ... **Jay Donaldson** defeated **Donnie Greene**.
(03-24-03)

—Kirk Sheppard

HAZARD—HCW Championship Wrestling at the Sherman Neace Athletic Center: TV champion **Scrap Dogg** beat **The Chosen One** by disqualification ... **Alex Walker** beat **Ric Gunner** ... **Stan Sierra** defeated **Stevie Phillips** ... **Ric Gunner** beat TV champion **Scrap Dogg** to win the title ... **Mike Harris** won a battle royal ... TV champ **Ric Gunner** beat **Alex Walker** ... **Mike Harris** defeated heavyweight champion **Shawn Christopher** by disqualification.
(03-22-03)

—Darrell Fugate

OWINGSVILLE—HCW Championship Wrestling at the Bath County Middle School: **Mike Harris** defeated **Stan Sierra** by disqualification ... **Scrap Dogg** beat **Alex Walker** to win the TV title ... **Ric Gunner** defeated heavyweight champion **Shawn Christopher** in a non-title match ... Tag team champions **Scrap Dogg** & **Mike Gunner** beat **Louisville Mugger** & **Alex Walker** by disqualification ... **Ric Gunner** beat **Stan Sierra** ... **Mike Harris** beat **The Chosen One** ... TV champion **Scrap Dogg** beat **Louisville Mugger** ... **Ric Gunner** & **Mike Harris** defeated **The Chosen One** & **Alex Walker** by disqualification.
(03-01-03)

—Darrell Fugate

MAINE

SOUTH PORTLAND—Eastern Wrestling Alliance at the Strive Center: **Billy Kryptonite** beat **Nick McKenna** ... **Antonio Thomas** won a four-way match against **Kenn Phoenix**, **Rick Daniels**, and **Vince Vicallo** to advance in the New England title tournament ... Tag team champs **The Elements of Suicide** beat **Brian Black** & **Johnny Curtis** ... **Cueball** beat **Larry Huntley**, **Kid Krazy** and **Adam Hastey** to advance in the New England title tournament ... **Dr. Heresy** beat **Frankie Armadillo** ... **Cueball** pinned **Antonio Thomas** to become the New England champion ... **Steve Ramsey** defeated **John Walters** to become the heavyweight champion.
(03-22-03)

—Jenn Gersham

SOUTH PORTLAND—Maine Event Wrestling at the Portland Expo Building: **Kappa Tappa Kegga** beat **Adam Hastey** & **Frankie Armadillo** ... **Robbie Ellis** pinned **Jay Jaillette** ... **Bull Moose** beat **Chris Sabo** ... **Bart Sawyer** defeated **Rocco Roselli** ... **The Fabulous Moolah** & **Mae Young** beat **Don Montoya** & **Paul Adams** ... **Mike Quackenbush** beat **Reckless Youth** in a best-of-three-falls match ... **Raven** pinned **Jeff Rocker** ... **Legion Cage** beat **Gran Akuma** ... **Blackjack Marciano** beat **Parts Unknown** ... **Kappa Tappa Kegga** & **Rocco Roselli** beat **Bart Sawyer**, **Adam Hastey**, & **Frankie Armadillo** by disqualification when **Adam Booker** interfered ... **Matt Lindsay** defeated **Damien Adams** ... **Julio Dinero** defeated **Rob Eckos** ... **Brian Christopher** beat **Syxx-Pac**.
(03-16-03)

—Timothy A. Walker

MARYLAND

GLEN BURNIE—Maryland Championship Wrestling at Michael's Eighth Avenue: **Reckless Youth** & **Travis Finity** beat **Rob Eckos** & **Qenaan Creed** ... **Brock Singleton** beat **Crazy Shay** ... **Dino Divine** defeated **Billy Redwood** ... **Adam Flash** pinned cruiserweight champion **2-Dope** to win the title ... **Derek Wayne** & **Buzz Stryker** beat **The Holy Rollers** when The Holy Rollers' bodyguard, **Church**, turned against them ... Rage TV champion **Joey Matthews** beat **Christian York** ... **Chad Bowman** beat **The Bruiser** ... **Alexis Laree** pinned **Angela** ... **Doug Delicious** beat **Buff Bagwell** ... Heavyweight champion **Danny Doring** defeated **Romeo Valentino**.
(03-12-03)

—Timothy A. Walker

MASSACHUSETTS

BOSTON—Ring of Honor at the Massachusetts National Guard Armory: **Chad Collyer** defeated **Matt Stryker** ... **The Amazing Red** defeated **Slim J** ... **A.J. Styles** won a four-way tag team scramble by himself against **The Backseat Boyz**, **Joel** & **Jose Maximo**, and **The Carnage Crew** to earn a tag title shot later that night. ... **Alex Arion** defeated **Hotstuff Hernandez** ... **Low-Ki** & **Da Hit Squad** destroyed **Special K** ... **Quiet Storm** & **Ghost Shadow** defeated **Dunn** & **Marcos** ... **C.M. Punk** defeated **Raven** by submission ... **Samoa Joe** won a four-way number-one contender's trophy match over **Homicide**, **B.J. Whitmer**, and **E.Z. Money** ... **A.J. Styles** & **The Amazing Red** defeated tag team champions **Christopher Daniels** & **Xavier** to win the title.
(03-22-03)

—Hannah Murphy

SOUTHBRIDGE—Eastern Wrestling Alliance at the Pilsudski Polish Club: **Little Mac** & **Evan Excel** beat **Aaron Morrison** & **The Masked Janitor** ... **Josh Daniels** defeated **Jim Nastic** ... **Larry Huntley** & **Rick Daniels** won a three-way tag team match against **Steve Ramsey** & **Adam Hastey** and **Brian Black** & **Johnny Curtis** ... **Frankie Armadillo** pinned **Chris Hamrick** ... **Cueball** & **Nick McKenna** beat **Antonio Thomas** & **Kenn Phoenix** ... **Dr. Heresy** beat **Kid Krazy** in an "I Quit" match.
(03-21-03)

—Calvin Hennesey

BROCKTON—World Wrestling Alliance at Massasoit Community College: **Shockwave** defeated **Rob Eckos** ... Heavyweight champion **Danny Davis** defeated **Purty Kurty** ... **Thunderbolt** beat **Mike Xylas** ... **Tim McNeany** & **The Hippie Freak** beat **Jonah Adelman** & **Danny Carney** ... **Travis N. Tomb** beat **Chip Stetson** ... **Vik Dalishus** beat **Aaron Stevens** ... **Paul Enormous** defeated **Vik D. Vine** ... **Damian Adams** & **Josh Daniels** won a three-way match over **Ken Phoenix** & **Johnny Ova** & **Sal Valentino** & **Kid Justice** ... **D-Lo Brown** defeated **Edward G. Xstasy**.
(03-07-03)

—Dominick Valenti

MICHIGAN

STERLING HEIGHTS—Independent Wrestling Revolution at Sunnybrook Golf & Bowl: **Kamikaze** pinned **Tommy Johnson** ... **Frankie the Face** & **Jaimy Cox** defeated **Klunk the Klown** & **Mark Gjoka** ... **Andy Muscat** beat **Justin Toxicated** ... **Jimmy Jacobs** beat **Chris Sabin** ... **Insanity** won a three-way dance against **Krazy** and **Deranged** ... **Gavin Starr** & **Alex Shelley** defeated **The Dealer Dealer** & **Homeless Jimmy** in a no-disqualification tag team mayhem match ... **Anthony Rivera** & **Truth Martini** beat **Conrad Kennedy III** & **Gutter** ... **Elvis Elliot** defeated the King of the Indies champion **"Amazing N8" Mattson** by disqualification ... Heavyweight champion **Breyer Wellington** beat **Steven Lee**.
(03-29-03)

—Vickie Sue Millian

EAST LANSING—WWE at the Breslin Student Event Center: **The Hurricane** beat **Steven Richards** ... **Rodney Mack** defeated **Maven** ... **Tommy Dreamer** pinned **Lance Storm** ... **Rob Van Dam** & **Kane** beat **Rico** & **Rosey** ... Women's champion **Victoria** beat **Jazz** and **Trish Stratus** in a three-way match ... **Test** pinned

Chris Jericho ... **Spike Dudley** beat **Chief Morley** ... Raw champion **Triple-H** defeated **Scott Steiner.**
(03-08-03)

—Steve Drew

MINNESOTA

COTTAGE GROVE—Neo Pro Wrestling at the Armory: **The Genuine Article** defeated **DOS** ... **Autumn Hayze** defeated **Violet** ... **Justin Lee** defeated **Shimdog** ... **Kaos** won a triple threat match against **Playboy Pete** and **Joey E** ... **Tommy Gunn** & **Logan Lasher** defeated **Jayson Vaine** & **John Johnson** ... **Ted Dixon** defeated **Pretty Boy Delgado** ... **Horace the Psychopath** defeated **Mason Quinn** in a first-blood match.
(03-22-03)

—Nicholas Loken

RICHFIELD—PPW at the American Legion Club: **Big Trucker Daddy** defeated **Dan Jesser** ... **Johnny Parks** defeated **Eclipse** ... **Tommy Cold** defeated **Sideshow Mike** in a hardcore match ... **J.R. the Punisher** defeated **Mitch Paradise** ... **Kenny Jay** & **J.B. Trask** defeated **Horace the Psychopath** & **Logan Lasher.**
(03-22-03)

—Nicholas Loken

LAKEVILLE—Steel Domain Wrestling at the High School: **Matt Burns** defeated **Scotty Zappa** ... **Johnny Parks** defeated **Kevin Krueger** ... **Mystique** & **Shawn Davari** defeated **Rain** & **Ted Dixon** ... **Chi-Town Thug** & **J.B. Trask** defeated **Red Lightning** & **Travis Sharpe** to win the tag team title ... **Magnus Maximus** defeated **Mason Quinn** ... **Lenny Lane** defeated **St. Holmes** ... **Adrian Lynch** defeated **Mitch Paradise.**
(03-15-03)

—Nicholas Loken

MISSOURI

COLUMBIA—WWE at the Hearnes Center: **Goldust** pinned **Steven Richards** ... **Maven** pinned **Rico** ... **Jeff Hardy** defeated **Christian** ... Women's champion **Victoria** beat **Trish Stratus** and **Jazz** in a three-way match ... **D-Von** & **Spike Dudley** beat **Chief Morley** & **Lance Storm** ... **Rob Van Dam** & **Kane** beat **Jamal** & **Rosey** ... **Chris Jericho** defeated **Test** ... **The Hurricane** beat **Rodney Mack** ... Raw champion **Triple-H** beat **Booker T.**
(03-16-03)

—Thomas Downs

ST. CLAIR—Midwest Powerhouse Wrestling TV taping at Knights of Columbus Hall: Missouri State champion **Christian Haze** won a triple threat match against **M-16** and **J.D. Hall** ... **Marcus Mansfield** beat **Shane Somers** ... **The Crocodile Kid** pinned **The Diamondback Dingo** ... **Damian Blade** & **Guy Smith** won the tag team title in a triple threat match against **The Lumberjacks** and champs **Fenix Rising** ... **Eric Logan** defeated **Steven Bishop** ... **Shane Somers** beat **The Searcher** when **The Chipster** accidentally threw in the towel ... **Scott Fenix** pinned **Jay Fenix** ... **Christian Haze**, **Chico Es Loco**, & **The Lumberjacks** beat **Guy Smith**, **Damian Blade**, **Agent C**, & **Agent U.**
(03-08-03)

—Chip Leffler

NEBRASKA

LINCOLN—WWE at the Pershing Center: **Jeff Hardy** defeated **Christian** ... **Rico** beat **Maven** ... **The Hurricane** beat **Rodney Mack** ... Women's champion **Victoria** beat **Trish Stratus** and **Jazz** in a three-way match ... **Rob Van Dam** & **Kane** beat **Jamal** & **Rosey** ... **D-Von** & **Spike Dudley** beat **Chief Morley** & **Lance Storm** in a table match ... **Chris Jericho** beat **Test** ... **Goldust** defeated **Steven Richards** ... Raw champion **Triple-H** defeated **Booker T.**
(03-15-03)

—John Somers

NEVADA

LAS VEGAS—Ultimate Wrestling Federation at the UWF Annex: **Brady A. Desire** defeated **Axl Morrison** ... **Papi Chulo** defeated **Funnybone** ... **The Riggs Bros.** defeated **Kid USA** & **Intruder III** ... **Roman Gomez** defeated **Night Crawler** ... **Shaun Daily** defeated **Joey D** ... **The Law** defeated **White Lightning** ... **Brady A. Desire** defeated **Legacy.**
(03-21-03)

—Shaun Daily

LAUGHLIN—Ultimate Pro Wrestling at the Edgewater /Colorado Belle Event Center: **Derek Neikirk** defeated **Machoa the Hawaiian Warrior** ... **Andrew Hellman** defeated **The Drunk Irishman** ... **Ghostwalker** defeated **"Outlaw" Mike Knox** by disqualification ... **Erika Porter** defeated **Nikki** ... **Solo Snuka** defeated **Kenny King** ... **Predator** defeated **Mike Mizanin** ... **Keiji Sakoda** defeated **Skulu the Samoan Savage** ... **The Ballard Brothers** defeated **The Thrillaz** for the tag team title ... **Frankie Kazarian** defeated **Kid Vicious** ... **Tom Howard** defeated **Bison** and **The Big Schwag.**
(03-15-03)

—Todd Keneley

NEW JERSEY

WALL TOWNSHIP—NWS at Wall High School: **The Power Company** beat **The Canadian Connection** ... Heavyweight champion **Biggie Biggs** defeated **Roman** ... Junior heavyweight champion **Kid Kruel** pinned **Dave Webb** ... **The Patriot** defeated **Kevin Knight** ... **Vinnie Delicious** won a triple threat match against **Johnny X** and **Corrupted Youth** ... **Big Vito** pinned **Hashim Ali** ... **Disco Inferno** beat **Danny Doring.**
(03-29-03)

—Dorothy Podsvirow

WEST PATERSON—IWF at the IWF Arena: **Brandon Young**, **Travis Blake**, & **Shawn Donavan** defeated **Pierce St. John**, **Shane O' Brien**, & **Eloy Fiesta** ... **Fred Sampson** pinned **Mikhail Verow** ... **Biggie Biggs** beat **Roman** by disqualification ... Heavyweight champion **Kevin Knight** defeated American champion **Erik Andretti** ... **Fred Sampson** won a 16-man battle royal.
(03-23-03)

—Dorothy Podsvirow

WEST PATERSON—IWF at the IWF Arena: **Mikhail Verow** beat **Fred Sampson** by disqualification ... **Shawn Donavan** pinned **Eloy Fiesta** ... Tag team champs **Brandon Young** & **Travis Blake** beat **Axis** & **Dante** ... **The Patriot** beat **Roman** ... American champion **Erik Andretti** defeated **Pierce St. John** ... **Dylan Black** & **Greg Goodman** beat **Tommy Trouble** & **Dan McGuire** ... **Kevin Knight** pinned heavyweight champion **Biggie Biggs** to win the title.
(03-22-03)

—Dorothy Podsvirow

Chris Divine barely had a chance to brace himself as Monsta Mack of Da Hit Squad drilled him with a brutal suplex. Still, Divine and Chi Chi Cruz rallied to win the match.

Mikey Whipwreck wasn't using this hammer to ring the bell to start his match with Red. He was using it to brutalize (and eventually defeat) the amazing young athlete that he helped to train.

NEPTUNE—American Championship Wrestling Alliance at the Shark River Hills Volunteer Fire Company: **Roman** defeated **Bobby Piper** ... **Alicia** defeated **Ariel** ... **The Oprhan** & **Slayer** defeated **Helter Skelter** ... **Kevin Knight** defeated **Reckless Youth** ... **Don Montoya** defeated **Ryan Wing** in a taped-fist match ... **C.J. Summers** defeated **Hadrian** for the heavyweight title.
(03-15-03)

—Melanie T. Kolbasowski

NEW YORK

NORTH TONAWANDA—Buffalo Championship Wrestling at the Dom Polski Hall: **Johnny Adams** defeated **Fabulous** ... **Troy Buchannan** defeated TV champ **Steve Kruz** for the title ... **Rik Matrix** defeated **Adam Cage** ... **Kid Justice** defeated **Huber Boy II** and **Charisma** in a three-way match ... **Killer Kumpf** & **Kwan Chang** won a four-way elimination match against **Canadian Bad Boy** & **Judge Krush**, **The Crazy Puerto Ricans**, and **Chills** & **Thrills** ... **Rik Matrix** defeated **Vik Dalishus** ... **Dusty Murdoch** wrestled **Crusher** to a no-contest ... **The Notorius BCL** defeated **Jason Atlas** ... **Steve Kruz** defeated TV champ **Troy Buchannan** for the title ... Niagara Frontier heavyweight champion **Ian Decay** defeated **Hellcat** in a dog-collar match.
(03-22-03)

—P.J. Maggiore

ROCHESTER—WWE at the Blue Cross Arena: **The Hurricane** defeated **Steven Richards** ... **Rico** defeated **Matt Cappotelli** (from *Tough Enough III*) ... **Spike Dudley** beat **Rico** ... **Molly Holly** defeated **Jacquelyn** ... **Rob Van Dam** beat **Christian** ... **Jeff Hardy** defeated **Christopher Nowinski** ... **D-Von Dudley** beat **Chief Morley** ... **Scott Steiner** beat **Lance Storm** ... **Chris Jericho** beat **Test** ... Raw champion **Triple-H** defeated **Booker T.**
(03-02-03)

—Alan Grant

NORTH CAROLINA

THOMASVILLE—New Empire Wrestling at the Thomasville Training Facility: Regional champion **Mark Michaels** defeated **Ravishing Ritchie** and **J-Money** by countout in a three-way bout ... **Kid Sinsation** defeated **Menace** ... **Jack Mack** & **Grease** defeated **Paco Loco** & **Willy Lego Myers** ... **Tony Lane** defeated **Alan Rage** ... **Rob McBride** defeated national champion **Malaki** in a non-title bout.
(03-30-03)

—Tara Rheaume

THOMASVILLE—New Empire Wrestling at the Thomasville Training Facility: **Corey Edsel** defeated **Tristian Blade** ... **Bruiser Graham** won a five-way elimination bout against **Alan Rage**, **Kid Sinsation**, **Grease**, and **J-Money** for a shot at the regional title, ... **Rob McBride** defeated **Jack Mackeral** ... Regional champ **Mark Michaels** defeated **Bruiser Graham** ... **Paco Loco** & **Wayne Insane** defeated **Kurt Solo** & **Matt Houston** to retain the tag title ... **Jimmy Valiant** defeated **Tony Lane**.
(03-29-03)

—Tara Rheaume

STEM—Southern Championship Wrestling at the Fire Hall: **Trailer Park Heat** beat **Brent Rage** ... **Brad Hunter** beat **The Giant Vermillion** ... **Big Slam** beat **Dorian Deville** ... **Seymour Snott** beat **Otto Schwanz** ... **C.W. Anderson** beat **Spank** ... **Dewey Cheatum** beat **Scab**.
(03-29-03)

—Greg Mosorjak

BURLINGTON—CWF/FWA-Carolinas at Club CWF: **Sexton Tyler** pinned **Stephen O' Hara** ... **Brass Munkey** pinned **Magic Moon** ... **Scotty Sabre** pinned **Kid Justice** ... **Brad Rainz** pinned **Joey Silva** ... **Drake Tungsten** & **Hugh B. Johnson** defeated **Brass Munkey** & **American Steel Ninja** ... Heavyweight champion **Corey Edsel** pinned **Trent Wylde** ... **Brad Attitude** pinned **Mikael Yamaha** ... **J-Money** pinned **Ric Converse** in to win the cruiserweight title.
(03-08-03)

—Grant Sawyer

OHIO

CINCINNATI—Heartland Wrestling Association at the Training Center: **Southside Playaz** defeated **Brian Carlucci** & **Ric Burn** ... **Robby Race** pinned **Menace** ... **Simply Spectacular** pinned **J.T. Shahr** ... **Q. Lee** beat **Apollo** ... **Hoss** pinned **Hussla** ... **T.J. Dalton** beat **Vortex** ... **Super Zeta** defeated **Medic 999** ... **Big Al** pinned **Brother Clay**... **Chet Jablonski** & **Cody Hawk** beat tag team champs **Matt Stryker** & **B.J. Whitmer** to win the title.
(03-25-03)

—Margaret Birchstock

ELYRIA—Mega Championship Wrestling at St. John's Lutheran Church Gym: **Sheik Abdul Hassan** beat **Kidrageous** ... **Sean Styles** beat **Dick Trimmins** ... **Jake Garrett** won a 20-man battle royal ... **Mad Dog Manson** beat **Chuck Brody** ... **Alcatraz** beat **The Nomad** by disqualification in a chain-on-a-pole brass knuckles title match ... **J-Ru** & **Glenn Spectre** beat **Klub X-treme** to win the tag team title ... **Aero** beat **Spence Slater** ... **Adam Cage** & **Chris Kole** beat **J.T. Lightning** & **J-Rocc**.
(03-15-03)

—Paul Myers

DAYTON—WWE at the Nutter Center: **The Hurricane** defeated **Steven Richards** ... **Maven** pinned **Rodney Mack** ... **Lance Storm** beat **Tommy Dreamer** ... **D-Von** & **Spike Dudley** beat **Chief Morley** & **Christian** ... Women's champion **Victoria** beat **Trish Stratus** and **Jazz** in a three-way match ... **Rob Van Dam** & **Kane** beat **Jamal** & **Rosey** ... **Chris Jericho** defeated **Test** ... Raw champion **Triple-H** defeated **Scott Steiner**.
(03-09-03)

—Steve Drew

YOUNGSTOWN—WWE at the Beeghly Center: **Brock Lesnar** beat **The Big Show** & **Paul Heyman** in a handicap match ... Cruiserweight champion **Matt Hardy** beat **Billy Kidman** ... **Nathan Jones** pinned **Kanyon** ... **Rhyno** pinned **John Cena** ... **Rey Misterio Jr.** defeated **Jamie Noble** ... Smackdown tag team champions **Shelton Benjamin** & **Charlie Haas** beat **Eddie** & **Chavo Guerrero Jr.** ... **Torrie Wilson** pinned **Nidia** ... **Chris Benoit** defeated **A-Train**.
(03-09-03)

—Claudia Gordon

PAINESVILLE—New Era Pro Wrestling at the Armory: **Chris Sabin** & **Alex Shelley** defeated **Gutter** & **Jimmy Jacobs** ... **Prince Juggalo** defeated **DisCole Fever** ... **Bobby Blaze** defeated **Brian Anthony** ... **Gangrel** defeated **Aero** ... **Mercedes** defeated **Syren** ... **Adam Cage** defeated **Frankie Kazarian** ... **Sheik Hassan** & **Dick Trimmins** defeated **Blackhammer** & **Chuck Brody** ... Triple crown champion **J-Rocc** defeated cruiserweight champion **Al B. Damm**
(03-08-03)

—Mike Williams

OKLAHOMA

TULSA—Tornado Lucha Libre at Salon Azul: **Romero Contreras** defeated **D-Day** ... **Ron Mac** defeated **X-Cal** ... Hardcore champion **Anthony Jackson** defeated light heavyweight champion **Tyler Lee** ... **Romero Contreras**, **El Furiosos**, & **El Sufamilico** defeated **Olympico Dorado**, **Dragon Rojo**, & **Anarquia** by countout ... **Sudden Impact** defeated **Shane Morbid** & **Karl Davis** ... TV champion **Sonny C** defeated Oklahoma champion **Rocco Valentino** to unify the belts in a no-disqualification match.
(03-28-03)

—Chris Burnham

PENNSYLVANIA

McADOO—World Star Wrestling at the Strand Roller Rink: **Sheik Hassan Kaisey** defeated **Shawn Fury** ... **J.T. Roberts** defeated **Matt Turner** ... **I.B. Green** pinned **Cousin Chill** ... **Blaze 'n' Glory** defeated **The Ring Crew** and **Tokyo Terrors** in a three-way dance ... **Danny Rage** defeated cruiserweight champion **Y-Kushi** for the title ... **Switchblade** beat **Tommy Hawk** ... **Steve the Teacher** beat **Mark Harro** ...

Morgus the Maniac pinned **Brayydon Shokker** ... **Kage** beat **Stu Braxton** ... **Donnie Brass** pinned heavyweight champion **Harry Acropolis** to win the title.
(03-29-03)

—Taylor Cates

QUARRYVILLE—Premier Wrestling Federation at the Solanco Fairgrounds: **Brian XL** defeated **Dewey Cheatum** ... **Rapid Fire Maldonado** & **Chi Chi Cruz** beat **Amazing Red** & **Joel Maximo** ... **Alexis Laree** pinned **Simply Luscious** to become the first PWF universal women's champion ... **Josh Daniels** & **Matt Striker** defeated **The Well Hung Warriors** ... PWF universal junior heavyweight champion **Quiet Storm** pinned **Jose Maximo** ... **Rockin Rebel** & **C.W. Anderson** beat **Chris Hamrick** & **Jack Victory** ... PWF universal champ **Steve Corino** pinned **Joey Matthews**.
(03-28-03)

—Bryan Riegel

EMMAUS—World Wide Wrestling Alliance at the Emmaus Fire Company Social Hall: **Din Mar** defeated **The New York Panther** ... **D.J. Danzar** defeated **Nick Castel** ... **JOJO** defeated **Michael Thorn** ... Intercontinental champion **Worlfman** defeated **Night Prowler** ... **Insane Sam** defeated **Ravage** ... **Heart Breaker** defeated **D.J. Danzar** to win the vacant heavyweight title.
(03-22-03)

—Dan Haney

HANOVER—All-American Wrestling Federation at the Broadway Hall: **Shawn Fury** defeated **Watsumi the Rising Sun** ... **The Prep Club** beat **Apollo Cruz** & **Jason Maximum** ... Cruiserweight champion **J.T. Roberts** pinned **Draven Blaze** ... **Harley Watkins** pinned **Minister of Misery** ... Heavyweight champion **Rikki Lane** beat **Otto Stchark** ... **Quinn Nash** wrestled **Saffron** to a 10-minute draw ... **Switchblade** defeated **Tommy Hawk** by disqualification ... **Brayydon Shokker** beat **Durst** ... **Morgus the Maniac** beat **Danny Rage** ... **Harry Acropolis** beat **The Bodyguard** ... **Quinn Nash** won a battle royal, last eliminating **Rikki Lane**.
(03-22-03)

—Taylor Cates

PHILADELPHIA—Ring of Honor at the Murphy Rec Center: **B.J. Whitmer** won a four-way match against **Dixie**, **Matt Stryker**, and **Alex Arion** ... **The Backseat Boyz** defeated **Dunn** & **Marcos** ... **Doug Williams** defeated FWA champion **Christopher Daniels** to win the title ... **C.W. Anderson**, **Samoa Joe**, & **Jack Victory** wrestled **Homicide** & **Da Hit Squad** to a no-contest ... **The Carnage Crew** defeated **Mase** & **Hotstuff Hernandez** ... Tag team champions **A.J. Styles** & **The Amazing Red** defeated **Jay** & **Mark Briscoe** ... **Low-Ki** defeated **Jody Fleisch** ... **Raven** & **Colt Cabana** defeated **C.M. Punk** & **Ace Steel** ... **Samoa Joe** defeated heavyweight champion **Xavier** to win the title.
(03-22-03)

—Joe Zanolle

PHILADELPHIA—Combat Zone Wrestling at Viking Hall: ***In the semifinal round of the trifecta elimination tournament:*** **Justice** won a three-way match against **Steve Madison** and **Jarelle** ... **Menace** won a three-way match against **Loco** and **Dunn** & **Marcos** ... **Jimmy Rave** won a three-way match against **Mike Mayhem** and **El Diabolico** ... ***Finals:*** **Jimmy Rave** won a three-way match against **Menace** and **Justice** to earn a spot in the Best of the Best 3 Tournament ... **Tony Mamaluke** defeated **Nick Berk** by submission to earn a spot in the Best of the Best 3 Tournament ... **Jon Dahmer** & **Cory Kastle** defeated **Jude** & **Niles Young** ... **Rebel's Army** won a three-way six-man tag team match against **Derek Frazier**, **Hurricane Kid**, & **Maxx** and **Tank Tolliman**, **Iceberg**, & **Dead End** ... **Ian Knoxx** defeated **Chris Stylz** ... **Ric Blade** defeated **Johnny Kashmere** in a match in which baseball bats were legal to earn a spot in the Best of the Best 3 Tournament ... **Ruckus** and **Chris Cash** went to a double-disqualification (**Sonjay Dutt** served as special guest referee) ... Ironman champion **Nick Mondo** defeated **Trent Acid** ... **Nate Hatred** & **Nick Gage** defeated **Messiah** & **B-Boy**.
(03-08-03)

—Jack Adams

PENN HILLS—International Wrestling Cartel at St. Bart's Parish Gym: **C.M. Punk** defeated **Carlton Kaz** ... **Al B. Damm** defeated **Dean Radford** ... **Bubba the Bulldog** defeated **Shirley Doe** ... **Spider Mask** wrestled **Dustin Ardine** to a no-contest when **Disco Inferno** interfered ... **A.J. Styles** defeated **Super Hentai** to win the super indy championship ... **Raven** defeated **C.M. Punk** ... **J.T. Rodgers** & **Troy Lords** defeated **Devil's Advocates** ... **Disco Inferno** defeated **Dustin Ardine** by disqualification ... **Seth James** defeated **T. Rantula** ... **Dennis Gregory** defeated **Disco Inferno** ... **Shirley Doe** & **Mysterious X** defeated **Super Hentai** & **James Keenan**.
(03-14-03)

—Josh Watko

ERIE—WWE at the Civic Center: **Brock Lesnar** pinned **The Big Show** ... Cruiserweight champion **Matt Hardy** defeated **Billy Kidman** ... **Nunzio**, **Chuck Palumbo**, & **Johnny Stamboli** beat **Brian Kendrick**, **Shannon Moore**, & **Sean O'Haire** ... **Nathan Jones** pinned **Kanyon** ... **Rhyno** beat **John Cena** ... **Rey Misterio Jr.** pinned **Jamie Noble** ... Smackdown tag team champions **Shelton Benjamin** & **Charlie Haas** beat **Eddie** & **Chavo Guerrero Jr.** ... **Nidia** pinned **Dawn Marie** (**Torrie Wilson** was the guest referee) ... **Chris Benoit** defeated **A-Train**.
(03-10-03)

—John Sanford

PITTSBURGH—XPW "Battle Of The 'Burgh" at the Golden Dome: **Julio Dinero** defeated **Chris Chetti** ... **Vic Grimes** defeated **Altar Boy Luke** ... **Salem** beat **Vic Grimes** ... Tag team champs **Youthanazia** won a three-way match against **Danny Doring** & **Christian York** and **Chris Hamrick** & **Tracey Smothers** ... King of the death match champion **Supreme** defeated **Angel** ... **Justice Pain** beat **Chris Candido** ... **Jerry Lynn** won a four-corners match against **Juventud Guerrera**, **Shark Boy**, and **Jonny Storm** ... Heavyweight champion **Shane Douglas** defeated **Justin Credible**.
(03-08-03)

—Dustin Nichols

CLEARFIELD—KCW at the YMCA: **The Hardliners** beat tag team champions **Jay Scott** & **Bobbi Shields** by countout ... **The Bubbster** defeated **Kidd Country** ... Heavyweight champion **Big Lenny** beat **Sebastian** ... Central Pennsylvania champion **Charlie Mansun** beat **Xander Graves** by disqualification ... **Xander Graves** pinned **Charlie Mansun** in a hardcore challenge match ... **Danny Doring** & **Kasanova Kato** beat **Mercury Flash** & **Zubov** ... **Xander Graves** & **Sebastian** won a tag team battle royal.
(03-01-03)

—Steve Kardolly

READING—WWE at the Sovereign Center: **Spike Dudley** & **Jacquelyn** defeated **Rico** & **Molly Holly** ... **Jeff Hardy** pinned **Christopher Nowinski** ... **The Hurricane** pinned **Steven Richards** ... **Scott Steiner** beat **Lance Storm** ... **Buh Buh Ray** & **D-Von Dudley** beat **Batista** & **Randy Orton** ... **Rob Van Dam** beat **Chief Morley** ... **Chris Jericho** beat **Test** ... Raw champion **Triple-H** defeated **Booker T.**
(03-01-03)

—Cameron Phillips

SOUTH CAROLINA

SPARTANBURG—American Pro Wrestling at the American Coliseum: **David Justice** beat **The Player** ... A three-way match between **Jimmy Bravo**, **A.J. Frost**, and **Kid Kwik** ended in a draw ... **Nick Fury** & **Dark Lion** beat **Neil Nitro** & **Derik Flair** ... **Jeremy Vain** beat **Scotty Smooth** ... **Section 8** & **J.W. Boss** beat **Steve Stasiak** & **Bubba Brooks** ... Heavyweight cham-

Rockin' Rebel wasn't counting on Rapid Fire Maldonado performing a little amateur oral surgery on him during his match. It was worth the pain, though, as Rebel escaped with a win.

Like most good wrestling Andersons, C.W. Anderson is a major proponent of working over one body part throughout a match. His old school tactics paid off against Chris Daniels, whom he beat to unify the PWF TV and U.S. titles.

pion **Dirty** beat **Jessie Black** ... **Jay Eagle** & **Scott Youngblood** beat **Sgt. Boomer Payne** & **Private Gump** to win the tag team title ... **Dillion Rage** beat **Viper** in a country whipping match. According to a prematch stipulation, **Viper** took five lashes from a belt afterward.
(03-22-03)

—Danny Parris

TENNESSEE

NASHVILLE—NWA-TNA at the Fairgrounds Coliseum: **Don** & **Ron Harris** won a three-way weapons match, beating **New Jack** & **The Sandman** and **Brian Lee** & **Slash** ... **Dusty Rhodes** defeated **Brian Lawler** in a ladder match ... **A.J. Styles** pinned **Glen Gilbertti** ... **Sonny Siaki** & **Desire** beat **David Young** & **Athena** after Young turned against Athena ... **Perry Saturn** beat **Mike Barton** by submission ... **D-Lo Brown** pinned **Mike Sanders** ... **Raven** pinned NWA-TNA X champion **Kid Kash** in a non-title match ... **Jerry Lynn** & **Red** defeated **Christopher Daniels** & **Elix Skipper**, **Chris Sabin** & **Jonny Storm**, and **Jason Cross** & **Shark Boy** in a four-way elimination match.
(04-09-03)

—Frank Krewda

NASHVILLE—NWA-TNA at the Fairgrounds Coliseum: **Brian Lawler** pinned **Chris Harris** ... **Trinity** defeated **Alexis Laree** ... **New Jack**, **The Sandman**, & **Perry Saturn** defeated **Don** & **Ron Harris** & **Christopher Daniels** ... **David Young** defeated **Sonny Siaki** ... **Ron Killings** beat **Elix Skipper** ... NWA-TNA X champion **Kid Kash** pinned **Jerry Lynn** ... NWA heavyweight champion **Jeff Jarrett** pinned **D-Lo Brown**.
(04-02-03)

—Frank Miller

NASHVILLE—NWA-TNA pay-per-view at the Fairgrounds Coliseum: **A.J. Styles** pinned **Mike Sanders** ... **Jerry Lynn** pinned **Konnan** ... **David Young** wrestled to a no-contest with **Sonny Siaki** ... **Dusty Rhodes** pinned **David Flair** in a bunkhouse match ... **Kid Kash** & **Trinity** defeated **Red** & **Alexis Laree** ... **D-Lo Brown** pinned **Chris Harris** ... **Brian Lee**, **Slash**, **The Sandman**, & **Perry Saturn** beat **Don** & **Ron Harris**, **Christopher Daniels**, & **Elix Skipper** after **Nelson Knight** (a.k.a. **Mabel/Viscera**) interfered.
(03-26-03)

—Steve Drew

NASHVILLE—NWA-TNA pay-per-view at the Fairgrounds Coliseum: **Low-Ki** & **Elix Skipper** beat **Brian Lee** & **Slash** by disqualification when **Malice** interfered ... **Juventud Guerrera** & **Konnan** beat **Jason Cross** & **Jerry Lynn** ... **Hacksaw Duggan** & **Moondog Spot** defeated **Glen Gilbertti** & **Mike Sanders** ... NWA-TNA X champion **Kid Kash** defeated **Red** and **Trinity** in a three-way match ... **D-Lo Brown**, **Jeff Jarrett**, & **Dusty Rhodes** defeated **David Flair**, **Brian Lawler**, & **Erik Watts** ... **Raven** beat **A.J. Styles** in a ladder match.
(03-19-03)

—Frank Miller

NASHVILLE—NWA-TNA pay-per-view at the Fairgrounds Coliseum: **Jerry Lynn** & **David Young** beat **Damian** & **Halloween** ... NWA-TNA X champion **Kid Kash** defeated **Jonny Storm** and **Red** in a three-way match ... **Don** & **Ron Harris** beat **Steve Corino** & **The Sandman** ... **Hacksaw Duggan** pinned **Mike Sanders** ... **Christopher Daniels** & **Low-Ki** defeated **Chris Harris** & **James Storm** to win the held-up NWA tag team title ... **Raven** wrestled **A.J. Styles** to a draw when they pinned each other simultaneously.
(03-12-03)

—Frank Miller

NASHVILLE—NWA-TNA pay-per-view at the Fairgrounds Coliseum: **Jerry Lynn** pinned **Super Crazy** ... **Brian Lee** & **Slash** defeated **Cassidy O'Reilly** & **Chase Stevens** ... **Jorge Estrada** pinned **Disgraceland** ... NWA-TNA X champion **Kid Kash** defeated **Red** ... **Glen Gilbertti** & **Mike Sanders** beat **Chris Harris** & **James Storm** ... **Raven** beat **The Sandman** in a "Clockwork Orange House Of Fun" match.
(03-05-03)

—Dave Lenker

KINGSPORT—Southern States Wrestling's 12th anniversary show at the Civic Auditorium: ***In the semifinal matches of the SSW tag team tournament:*** **The Batten Twins** beat **The Phoenix Brothers** ... **Beau James** & **Gator McAllistor** beat **Eddie** & **Jimmy Golden** by countout ... ***Finals:*** The Batten Twins beat James & McAllister by countout to win the belts ... ***In non-tournament matches:*** **Robbie Cassidy** beat **E.Z. Money**... **Jeff Tankersley** & **Sherri Martel** beat **Scott Sterling** & **Brandi Alexander** ... **Mike Cooper** beat **Sam Osborne** ... **Jeff Tankersley** pinned **Regulator Steel** ... **Ray Idol** won "The Great 8" Royal Rumble-style battle royal.
(03-22-03)

—Fay Ferguson

FLAGPOND—Southern States Wrestling TV taping at the Elementary School: **Robbie Cassidy** beat **Thorn** ... **Bryan Wayne** beat **Crimson** ... **Scott Sterling** beat **Tim Baldwin** ... Tag team champs **The Blond Bombers** beat **Scott Sterling** & **Bryan Wayne** ... **The Batten Twins** beat **Ray Idol** & **Robbie Cassidy** ... **Eddie Golden** beat TV champion **Beau James** by disqualification ... **Brian Overbay** beat **Crimson** ... **Jimmy Golden** beat **K.C. Thunder** by disqualification ... **E.Z. Money** & **Robbie Cassidy** beat tag champs **The Blond Bombers** by countout. During this match, **Tim Baldwin** broke his leg in three places ... **K.C. Thunder** & **Beau James** beat **Darrel** & **David Ramsey**.
(03-08-03)

—Fay Ferguson

TEXAS

DENTON—Xtreme Championship Wrestling at the XCW Arena: **Seth Shai** beat **Chad Hart** by disqualification ... TV champ **Epi the Phat Samoan** pinned **Jamie the Sound Guy** ... **Mike Foxx** pinned **Tim Storm** ... Ironman champ **Scott Phoenix** pinned **Drunk Adam** ... **Action Jackson** wrestled **Gabe Roach** to a double-disqualification.
(03-28-03)

—Rob Moore

ALVIN—Wild Southern Wrestling at the Country Store Bar and Grill: **The Enforcer** defeated **A.J. Rayne** ... **Johnny Blade** pinned **Rocco Carmanooch** ... **Major Pest** beat **Slick Rick** ... **Thunder** & **Max Carnage** defeated **Anthony Bishop** & **Johnny Blade** ... **Justin Walker** and **Mr. Entertainment** wrestled to a no-contest.
(03-23-03)

—Eric Sanchez

TYLER—New Age Wrestling Alliance at the NAWA Arena: **Bryan Ryder** beat **Fatality** ... **Jerry Brown** beat **Adam Action** ... **Gemeni** wrestled **Khan** to a time-limit draw ... **Adam Arson** & **Sean Cordova** beat **Hallowmass** by disqualification ... **Jeff Brown** beat **Joey Titan**.
(03-23-03)

—John Larance

DeLEON—New Era Wrestling at the Chamber of Commerce Building: **Disciples of Destruction** defeated **Madd Mike Payne** & **Wildman** ... **Lethal Weapon** defeated **Tex Mex Connection** ... **Chuck Murphy** defeated **ZENZEN** ... **Bobby 2 Badd** defeated **Mr. Entertainment** ... Junior heavyweight champion **Keats Douglas** defeated **Joey Corman** ... **Kyzer Douglas** defeated **Equalizer** by disqualification ... **Brett Bonz** defeated **John Solo** in a streetfight.
(03-22-03)

—Dave Wilson

VIRGINIA

RICHMOND—NWA-Virginia at the Blackwood Rec Center: **Damian Wayne** beat **Mr. X** ... **Sonjay Dutt** pinned **Brandon Day** ... IWF champion **Biggie Biggs** beat **Ryan Spade** ... **Chino Martinez** beat **Robert Royal** to tie their best-of-seven series for the NWA-Virginia junior title ... XIW champion **Dirty Money** pinned **Dragan Frost** ... NWA-Virginia champion **Preston Quinn** beat **Greg Steel**.
(03-15-03)

—Dorothy Podsvirow

WEST VIRGINIA

CAIRO—Mason Dixon Wrestling at the Glade Elementary School Gym: **Tommy Hawk**, **Chaz Stylez**, & **Pud** beat **Ricky Lane** & **Murder Inc.** ... **Switchblade** beat **Zubov** ... **Bob Brown** beat

The Rising Sun ... **T.J. Phillips** beat **El Guapo** ... **The Urban Death Squad** beat **Scotty McKeever** & **Roger Hamm** ... **Cuban Assassin II** beat **Bubba Rose** by disqualification ... **Bob Brown** won a battle royal.
(03-15-03)

—Kelli Jenkins

COWEN—Mason Dixon Wrestling at the Glade Elementary School Gym: **Tommy Hawk**, **Chaz Stylez**, & **Ricky Villian** defeated **Rikki Lane** & **Murder, Inc.** ... **Switchblade** pinned **Zubov** ... **Bob Brown** defeated **Watsumi the Rising Sun** ... **T.J. Phillips** beat **El Guapo** ... **Bob Brown** won a battle royal ... **Cuban Assassin II** beat **Buddy Rose** (not the original) by disqualification ... **The Urban Death Squad** beat **Scotty McKeever** & **Roger Hamm**.
(03-15-03)

—Taylor Cates

MOOREFIELD—Championship Pro Wrestling at the High School: **Bob Keller** defeated **The Safari Hunter** ... **Zubov** defeated **Mercury Flash** ... Women's champion **Tiffani Monroe** pinned **Sienna Blaze** ... Heavyweight champion **Johnny Graham** wrestled **Switchblade** to a double-disqualification ... **Dargon** & **Max Havoc** defeated **Sonny Landel** & **Cabbie** ... **The Intimidators** defeated tag team champions **Tommy Hawk** & **Richie Stevens** to win the title ... **Shane Shadows** beat **Brian Jonson** & **J.B. Righteous** in a handicap match.
(03-08-03)

—Taylor Cates

WISCONSIN

STRATFORD—National Federation of Wrestling at the Country Aire: **Havoc** defeated **J-Real** ... **Shinobi** won a four-way match against **Cameron Steele**, **Trey Steel**, and **Major Chaos** to win the cruiserweight title ... **Violet** defeated **Rain** ... **Genuine Article** defeated **Mason Quinn** ... **Tejas** defeated **Tiny Tubbs** ... **Boogieman** defeated **Peter B. Beatiful** ... **Darkchild** & **Anicrusix** defeated **Ace Spade** & **Malice** ... **La Parka** defeated **Chaz Kildare** in a loser-leaves-the-NFW match ... **Logan Lasher** won a triple threat match against **Horace the Psychopath** and **Steve Stardom**.
(03-08-03)

—Nicholas Loken

OCONTO—Hard Knocks Wrestling at the Senior High School: A battle royal ended in a no-contest ... **Adrian Lynch** & **Kujo** defeated **Chris Mason** & **Dinn T. Moore** ... **Mike Mercury** defeated **Angel Armoni** ... **Col. Corruption** defeated **Nate Strong** ... **Hannibal** defeated **Steve Stardom** & **Chaz Kildare** in a handicap match ... **J-Real** won a six-way match against **Red Lightning**, **El Vato**, **Michael James**, **Izzy Savard**, and **JJJ** ... **Johnny Parks** defeated **Kevin Kruger** ... **Jim Neidhart** & **Vegas** defeated **Sam Hayne** & **Sammy Savard**.
(03-07-03)

—Nicholas Loken

INTERNATIONAL

CANADA

LADYSMITH, BRITISH COLUMBIA—Vancouver Island Wrestling Federation at the Frank Jameson Community Centre: ***Light heavyweight title tournament, quarterfinal matches***: **Scott Steel** pinned **T. Cash** ... **Inferno** pinned **Buck-10** ... **D'Playa** pinned **Masked Dancer** ... ***Non-tournament matches:*** **Scott Steel** pinned **Nomad** ... **Ice** defeated **Hardcore Morley** by disqualification ... Hardcore champion **Scott Douglas** pinned **Shane Davis** ... Heavyweight champion **Marcus Rios** pinned **Mark Mayhem** in an "Anywhere In Ladysmith" match ... **Ice** defeated **Marty Sugar** in a chain match.
(03-29-03)

—Al Richmond

WINNIPEG, MANITOBA—Premier Championship Wrestling at the PCW Stratosphere: **Darren Dalton** pinned **Greg Romijn** ... **Rawskillz** defeated **Shawn Houston** ... **Adam Knight** beat **Chad Ripley** ... **Kenny Omega** & **Donnie DiCaprio** defeated **Ronnie** & **Woody** ... **Chris Stevens** pinned **Pete Chee** ... **Chi Chi Cruz** defeated **Shane Madison** ... **Kenny Omega** won a 15-man battle royal.
(03-28-03)

—Curtis Breslaw

Justin Credible and Steve Corino were doing battle for the ECW World title less than three years ago, and lately they've been trading the PWF universal heavyweight championship. Corino won it this time.

TORONTO, ONTARIO—Apocalypse Wrestling Federation at the Birchmount: **Jaguar Vijay Singh** defeated heavyweight champion **Asylum** to win the title ... **Joey Knight** & **Arizona** defeated **Jerrick Miller** & **S.I.L.K.** in a tornado tag team match ... **Zacary Springate III** pinned **James Champagne** ... **Slade** beat **G.Q.** ... **"Codfather" Billy Flynn** pinned **El Hiney** ... **Danny Dynamic** defeated **Mysterious Mayhem** ... **Heather**, **Kevin Grace**, & **Tony Mack** defeated **Vladimir Urkov**, **Zacary Springate III**, & **Phoenix**.
(03-23-03)

—Ron Hutchinson

QUEBEC CITY, QUEBEC—Canadian Championship Wrestling at the Centre Mgr. Marcoux: Independent champion **Radikal Rage** pinned **Mr. Xtreem** ... Tag team champions **Useless Authority** defeated **The New Breed** ... **Kona** defeated **Nightmare Manson** in a chair match ... Lightweight champion **Scott Matrix** pinned **Davey Jackson** ... **Giovanni** pinned heavyweight champion **The Nail** to win the belt ... **Mr. Xtreem** won a 30-men Royal Rumble-style match to become the number-one contender to the heavyweight championship .
(03-14-03)

—Patrick Mercier

OLDCASTLE, ONTARIO—Border City Wrestling at the Ciociaro Club: **Matrox** pinned **Jimmy Jacobs** ... **Eric Young** pinned **Original Sinn** ... **Trent Steele** & **Ruffy Silverstein** beat **The Hacker** & **Gutter** ... **Larry Destiny** defeated **Magnus** ... **Chris Sabin** won a three-way dance against **Jerry Lynn** and **Frankie Kazarian** to become the new TV champion ... **John E. Bravo** pinned **Kris Chambers** ... **Bobby Rude** defeated **Alex Shelley** by submission ... Tag team champs **El Tornado** & **Tyson Dux** defeated **Petey Williams** & **Mike Legacy** ... **Sabu** pinned **A-1** ... **D-Lo Brown** defeated heavyweight champion **Johnny Swinger** to win the title after interference from **Jerry Lynn**.
(03-06-03)

—Patty Jackson

NIAGARA FALLS, ONTARIO—Neo Spirit Pro Wrestling at Polish Hall: **Los Jalapeno** & **Sean Ball** defeated **Ruffy Silverstein** & **Marco Malaquia**, **Romeo Adams** & **Floyd Osborne**, and **Tony Carbonie** & **Primo Scordino** in a four-way match to win the tag team title ... **Custom Made Man** beat **Sean Spears** ... **Hacker** beat **"Inferno" Johnny Adams** ... **T.J. Harley** pinned **Original Sinn** ... **J.C. Owens** pinned **J.T. Playa** ... **Lazzarus** defeated **Kris Chambers** ... **Tyson Dux** defeated **Cody Steele** ... **Eric Young** defeated **Derek Wylde** in a ladder match to win the heavyweight title. **J.C. Owens** then defeated Young in an impromptu challenge match to win the heavyweight title from him.
(03-01-03)

—Dan Murphy

SOUTH AFRICA

JOHANNESBURG—WWE at the Dome: Smackdown tag team champions **Shelton Benjamin** & **Charlie Haas** defeated **Billy Kidman** & **Rey Misterio Jr.** ... Cruiserweight champion **Matt Hardy** defeated **Chavo Guerrero Jr.** ... **Mark Henry** pinned **Bill DeMott** ... **Eddie Guerrero** pinned **Jamie Noble** ... **Chris Benoit** & **Rikishi** defeated **Kurt Angle** & **John Cena** ... **Torrie Wilson** beat **Dawn Marie** in a bra and panties match (**Funaki** was the guest referee) ... **Brock Lesnar** beat **The Big Show** & **Paul Heyman** in a handicap match.
(03-01-03)

—Matt Brock

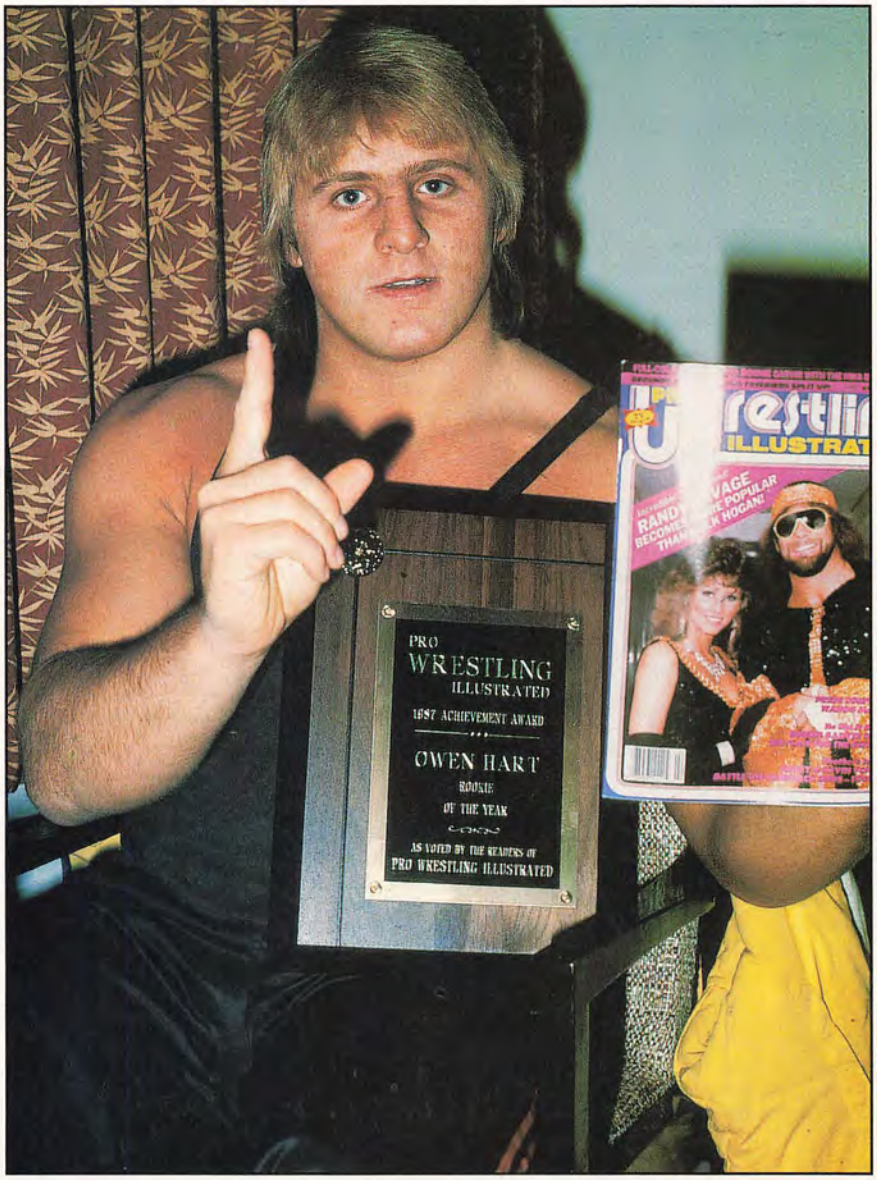
CAPETOWN—WWE at the Good Hope Centre: **Mark Henry** pinned **John Cena** ... **Funaki** pinned **Jamie Noble** ... Cruiserweight champion **Matt Hardy** beat **Billy Kidman** ... Smackdown champion **Kurt Angle** defeated **Chris Benoit** ... Smackdown tag team champions **Shelton Benjamin** & **Charlie Haas** wrestled to a no-contest with **Eddie** & **Chavo Guerrero Jr.** and **Rey Misterio Jr.** & **Rikishi** in a three-way match ... **Torrie Wilson** beat **Dawn Marie** in a bra and panties match (**Nidia** was the guest referee) ... **Brock Lesnar** beat **The Big Show** & **Paul Heyman** in a handicap match.
(02-27-03)

—Matt Brock

PWI classic

From the August 1988 issue of *The Wrestler*

OWEN HART: WHY HE MUST STEER CLEAR OF HIS BROTHER BRET

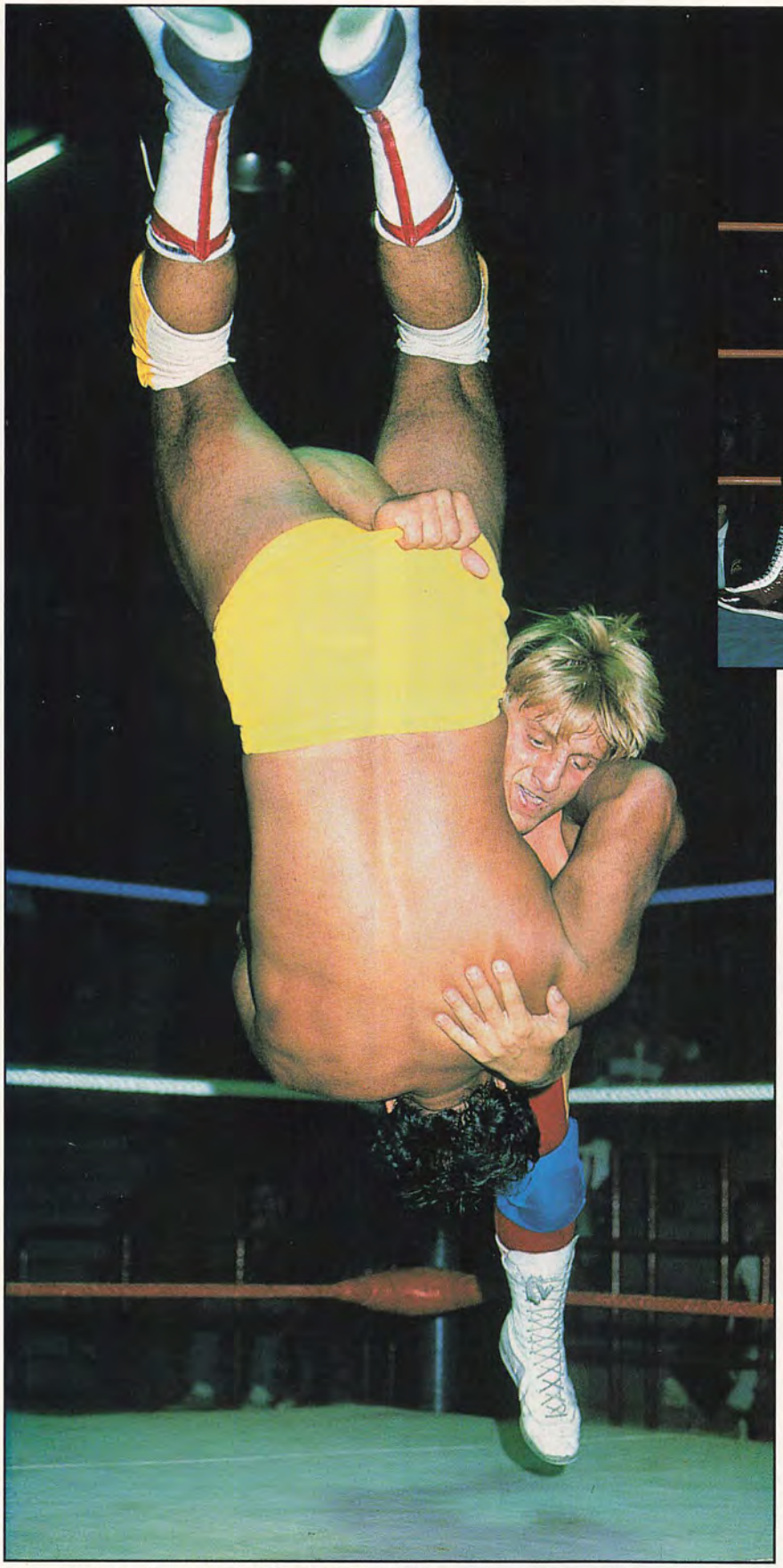


1987 Rookie of the Year Owen Hart is one of the finest young talents in wrestling, but he is headed for disaster if he decides to team with his brother Bret. Just ask their parents

STU AND HELEN HART have made their contribution to wrestling. Their eight sons, Keith, Smith, Bruce, Wayne, Dean, Ross, Bret, and Owen, all grew up to become professional wrestlers—in the case of several of them, outstanding professional wrestlers. While they all chose the same profession, they did not choose the same approach to the ring.

"Stu and I are always talking about how differently the children turned out," Helen said while paging through the Hart family album. She paused for a moment to glance at a snapshot of Bret dunking his younger brother Owen's head into a puddle of mud. "That was taken while they were away at summer camp. Owen was voted 'Best Camper.' Bret, that little devil, had those counselors going absolutely crazy."

She continued to page through



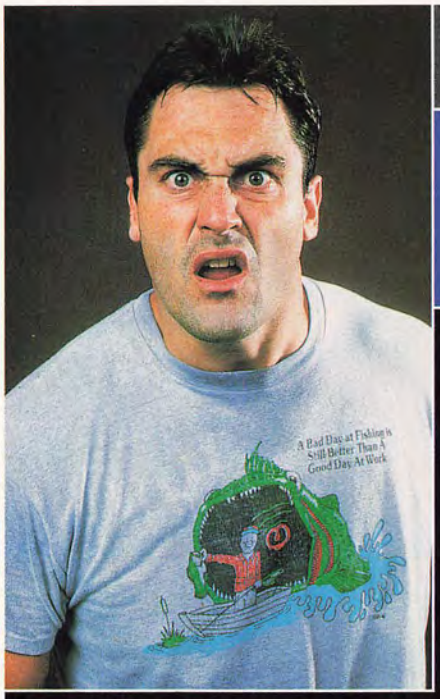
Owen Hart, for the most part, took the scientific approach to wrestling against Great Gama Singh and others in Stampede Wrestling in 1988. His parents feared he'd change his ways for the worse if he began teaming with brother Bret in the WWF.

Bret Hart and brother-in-law/tag team partner Jim Neidhart were on the verge of breakup in 1988, fueling speculation that he and his brother would get together.

the album and then turned to her husband. "Don't you think, honey, that Bret was always the biggest troublemaker of all the children?" she asked. "I can't remember a day when Bret wasn't getting into trouble with his teachers or the other boys at school. Owen was always the littlest angel, and he hasn't changed at all."

Stu leaned back in his rocking chair and put the tip of his finger to his forehead, reaching far back into his memory to remember when Owen and Bret were just Stu and Helen's little boys. He got up from his chair, hiked his pants, paced back and forth across the room, and finally spoke.

"Yep, I'd say that Bret was always the biggest troublemaker," Stu said. "You know, Bret always wanted to be a wrestler, just like his daddy, but sometimes he took it a little too far. I remember saying to Helen one day, 'Honey, when the kid gets older, he's gonna be the worst rulebreaker you ever saw. He's just got it in him.' Helen said that wasn't true, but I could also tell that somewhere inside she knew I was right.



Mike Rotundo

Ratings

August 1988

TOP 10
1. Ric Flair
2. Randy Savage
3. Sting
4. Curt Hennig
5. Ted DiBiase
6. Lex Luger
7. Terry Taylor
8. Hulk Hogan
9. Mike Rotundo
10. Owen Hart

TAG TEAMS
1. Arn Anderson & Tully Blanchard
2. The Road Warriors
3. Demolition
4. Sting & Lex Luger
5. The Fantastics
6. The Midnight Express
7. Warlord & Barbarian
8. Paul Diamond & Pat Tanaka
9. Steve & Shaun Simpson
10. Bruce Hart & Brian Pillman

NWA
World champion: Ric Flair
1. Sting
2. Larry Zbyszko
3. Mike Rotundo
4. Nikita Koloff
5. Lex Luger
6. Barry Windham
7. Al Perez
8. Steve Williams
9. Jim Garvin
10. Shane Douglas

WWF
World champion: Randy Savage
1. The Honky Tonk Man
2. Ted DiBiase
3. Hulk Hogan
4. Andre the Giant
5. Bam Bam Bigelow
6. Brutus Beefcake
7. Hacksaw Duggan
8. Jake Roberts
9. Rick Steamboat
10. Rick Rude

AWA
World champion: Curt Hennig
1. Greg Gagne
2. Jerry Lawler
3. Wahoo McDaniel
4. Paul Diamond
5. Soldat Ustinov
6. Eddie Gilbert
7. Jeff Jarrett
8. Rick Morton
9. Ricky Rice
10. Pat Tanaka

MOST POPULAR
1. Hulk Hogan
2. Sting
3. Randy Savage
4. Lex Luger
5. Kerry Von Erich
6. Hacksaw Duggan
7. Michael Hayes
8. The Ultimate Warrior
9. Jerry Lawler
10. The Midnight Rider

MOST HATED
1. Ted DiBiase
2. Andre the Giant
3. Ric Flair
4. The Honky Tonk Man
5. Eddie Gilbert
6. Curt Hennig
7. Larry Zbyszko
8. Barry Windham
9. Rick Rude
10. Iceman Parsons

"Now Owen, on the other hand, was a different story," Stu continued. "He never caused much trouble to anyone, although he'd occasionally get into a mess like kids do, but a lot of times it was also because of Bret. Now Bret was a real devil, just like Helen said, but he'd occasionally put on this sweet face and act like nothing was wrong. That's when he'd rope in Owen, and Owen, who never suspected anybody in his life, was always easy prey. Then Owen would get into trouble."

Helen opened another photo album to a page that showed Owen

Owen was about as clean-cut as a man could be as a wrestler when he battled Makhan Singh (left). Yet even then he was using a move that would Bret famous, the sharpshooter (above). He clearly looked up to his older brother.

in his finest clothes posing for a school photo. Nearly imperceptible is a young boy in the background sneaking up behind Owen with a pail of water. "That would be Bret. We keep this photo for laughs," Helen explained, "because a few seconds after that photo was taken, that pail of water went right over Owen's head. Me and Stu just said, 'Well, that's Bret,' but the headmaster of the school gave Bret quite a scolding."

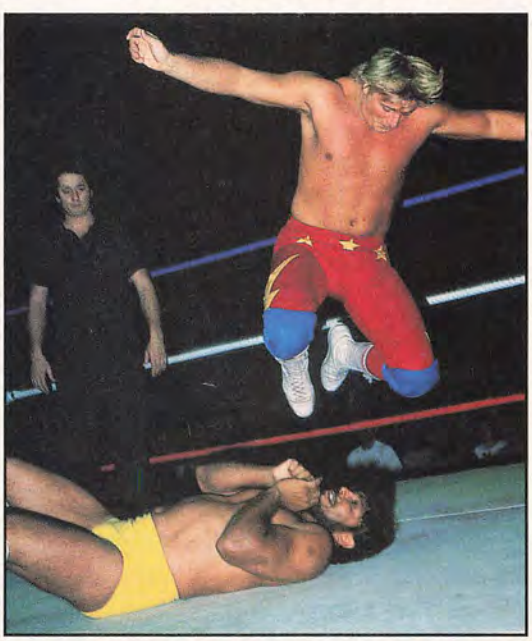
Stu and Helen started to laugh. Events that happened in the past seem so harmless when looked at many years later, and these family reminiscences are certainly amusing. But when viewed in light of what has happened professionally to Owen and Bret Hart, they take on new meaning; when viewed in light of what soon may happen, they're even more important.

And dangerous.

Owen, who was 1987's Rookie of the Year, who has been Stampede North American champion since April 10, 1987, and who is one of the finest young scientific aerial artists in the sport, recently told a shocked group of reporters that he would consider teaming with Bret if his brother dumped Hart Foundation teammate Jim Neidhart. No one seriously considered this to be a possibility ... until WrestleMania IV.

Bret Hart and Bad News Brown, both rulebreakers, were the last two remaining in the March 27 battle royal. They appeared willing to split the $25,000 first prize when Bad News viciously attacked Bret from behind and dumped him over the top rope. With the fans cheering him, Bret smashed the battle royal trophy to pieces, and a new feud was born ... or at least renewed. Bret (then a fan favorite) and Brown (then known as Bad News Allen) battled for nearly two years in Calgary during the early-1980s.

Since March, Bret has concentrated on his rivalry with Brown while



"I love my children, all of them, but Bret's always been up to no good ... I'd be afraid that he'd bring Owen down with him," warned their mother, Helen.

Little did anyone know in 1988 that an Owen vs. Bret feud would be one of the WWF's hottest of the mid-1990s, or that Owen's betrayal of Bret would trigger it.

teaming less frequently with Neidhart. A talented veteran with the ability to wrestle scientifically or brawl violently, Bret seems to enjoy the cheers of the fans, and rumors have circulated that he has become disenchanted with Neidhart. A breakup appears imminent, which could lead to a new Hart Foundation consisting of Bret and Owen.

But can Owen trust Bret?

"I love my children, all of them," said Helen Hart, "but Bret's always been up to no good. Down deep, Bret's a good boy, but he's very mischievous. Bret can't help but get in a little trouble some of the time, and I'd be afraid that he'd bring Owen down with him. The fans really love Owen, and he has his own style. I love to see my children wrestle together, but in this case I'm not too sure."

Certainly, a mother knows best. The teaming of Owen and Bret Hart could mean trouble for Owen. One untrustworthy rulebreaker in a family is more than enough. Brotherly love may be a wonderful thing, but Owen would do best to avoid his brother—Neidhart or no Neidhart. □

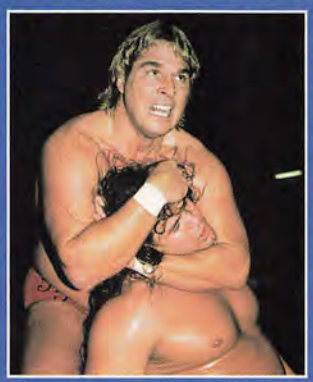
The Wrestler, August 1988

The cover: A shift in power in the tag team divisions of the WWF and WCW was the focus of our two main cover stories. Matt Brock wrote a piece defending the manner in which the heel team Demolition won the WWF tag title from Strike Force, while we also investigated the possibility that Barry Windham's decision to betray tag team partner Lex Luger and, in essence, to hand their WCW tag belts over to Horsemen Arn Anderson and Tully Blanchard was all part of a grand scheme hatched by Windham and J.J. Dillon.

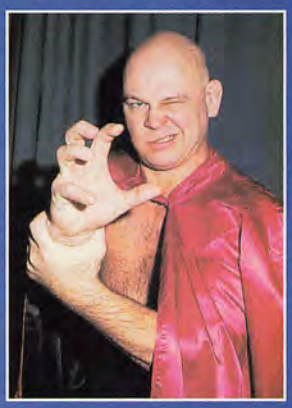
No Charge: The fact that Eddie Gilbert placed a bounty on the head of long-time enemy Jerry Lawler was not a huge surprise to anyone close to either man. What surprised us was that although quite a few men were interested in taking out "The King"—including Dory Funk Jr. and Curt Hennig—none of them, it seemed, wanted Gilbert's money. They hated Lawler as much as anyone, but they just wanted to hurt him for fun!

Precious Interview: "Precious" Paul Ellering was one of the most colorful and well-spoken managers of the 1980s, and he had two pretty dominant protégés in Hawk and Animal, The Road Warriors. He continued to speak highly of them in "Q & A," even though it had been a few years since they captured a major title in the U.S. He also ripped Paul Jones and his Powers of Pain for a heinous attack they perpetrated on Hawk and Animal, and predicted his guys would expose them as Road Warrior wannabes.

Schemer's Scheme: As a WWE agent in 2003, Terry Taylor knows he might occasionally be called upon to keep peace between wrestlers who are having trouble getting along backstage. Fifteen years ago, he wasn't known as a peacekeeper at all in the World Class territory. In fact, he was frequently fined for showing no regard for rules. That's why it was so hard for anyone to take him seriously when he announced in 1988 that he had a plan for reuniting the feuding Freebirds, Buddy Roberts, Terry Gordy, and Michael Hayes.



The Skinny On Raschke: Most of our "X-Ray" panelists had a good time coming up with their assessments of colorful AWA star Baron Von Raschke. Capt. Lou Albano liked the veteran a lot, describing him as "middle-aged and crazy—just like me!" Killer Kowalski championed him for his willingness to "stoop to any level to hurt his opponent. That's the mark of true greatness!" But Larry Hennig, upset that Raschke had recently defeated his son Curt, threatened to resign from the panel if we didn't give him "real" wrestlers to evaluate.



INSIDE Wrestling BACK ISSUES

Be sure to fill in the gaps in your collection of "the magazine that rips the lid off pro wrestling!" INSIDE WRESTLING gives you all the information you need to keep up with the pro wrestling scene!

Avoid sellouts—order today!

March 1995: Predictions 1995. Also: Nastys, Razor Ramon, Tasmaniac, Kid-Man O' War, Pillman & Hogan.

June 1995: The Beginning Of The End? Will Hulk Hogan Get Burned By Friendly Fire? Also: Steve Austin, Gangstas, Public Enemy, Bret-Owen, Jeff Jarrett.

Oct. 1995 (Special Issue): WCW Midyear Report. Also: Randy Savage, Bret & Cactus, Sting, Diesel, Hawk.

Nov. 1995: One Defense In Four Months?! Strip Hulk Hogan Of The Title—Now! Also: Alex Wright, Tatanka, King of Ring, Chris Benoit, Backlund-Clinton.

Dec. 1995: White With Fright, Green With Envy: Why The Undertaker Had To Bury Kama. Also: Vader-Hogan, Warrior-Renegade, Gangstas-PE, Waylon Mercy, Heavenly Bodies.

Jan. 1996: Our Holiday Wish List For 1996! Also: Scott Norton, Sid Vicious, Psicosis-Misterio, Barry Horowitz, Sabu.

Feb. 1996: Wrestling's Top Stars: What 1996 Has In Store For Them! Also: Goldust, Sherri-Parker, Mikey Whipwreck, Smokin' Gunns.

March 1996: His Excellency! How Bret Masterminded Diesel's Execution. Also: Jeff Jarrett, Giant, Jim Cornette, Survivor Series, Eddie Guerrero.

June 1996: Luger Or Hogan? If Sting Makes The Wrong Choice, He's Through! Also: Road Warriors, Roddy Piper, Ahmed Johnson, Raven, Al Snow

Aug. 1996: The Greening Of Wrestling: How Sting & Shawn Will Become $50,000,000 Men! Also: Bodydonnas, Giant, Guerrera-Misterio, George Steele, Goldust & Marlena.

Sept. 1996: She's No Boob! Sunny—More Than Just Sex Appeal! Also: Brian Pillman, 911, Lawler-Jarrett, Alex Wright.

Oct. 1996 (Special Issue): WCW Midyear Report. Also: Jake Roberts, Yokozuna, Giant-Konnan, Ahmed Johnson, Chris Jericho, strutters.

Nov. 1996: The Steiners: Feasting On A Buffet Of Violence. Also: Shawn Michaels, Sabu-Douglas, King of Ring, Eddie Guerrero, truck stop terror.

Dec. 1996: Three Women For Four Horsemen? The Hot Search For A Fourth Filly Has Begun! Also: Sunny & Gunns, Giant, Goldust, Cornette & Hart, Jerry Jarrett.

Holiday 1996 (Special Issue): The Tombstone: Wresling's Deadliest Finisher. Also: 1997 calendar, "Pyscho" Sid, Benoit-Misterio, Steiners-NWO, Pit Bull I, Jushin Liger.

Feb. 1997: Trouble In Egoville: Is There An NWO Within The NWO? Also: Chris Candido, Bret-Shawn, Ric Flair, Joey Styles, Liger-Benoit.

June 1997: Ahmed Johnson Reveals: "I Almost Joined The Nation Of Domination." Also: Mankind, Lex Luger, NWO, Davey Boy Smith, Jerry Graham.

Oct. 1997 (Special Issue): WCW Midyear Report. Also: LOD-PG-13, Rob Van Dam, Flair & Horsemen, Ken Shamrock, McMichael-White, Madd & Mama Maxxine.

Nov. 1997: WWF War Zone: Interfederation Battles Rock The Sport! Also: Ahmed Johnson, Curt Hennig, *Nueva* World Order, Chris Candido, Dan Severn.

Dec. 1997: Losing Is Bull! Has Dennis Rodman Had It With Hulk Hogan? Also: Steve Austin, Jarrett & Debra, Harts, Funk-Francine, Chris Jericho.

Holiday 1997 (Special Issue): The Steiners' Million-Dollar Gamble! Also: 1998 calendar, Alex Wright, The Patriot, Sgt. Slaughter, Turnbuckle Turkey Awards.

Jan. 1998: Our Holiday Wish List For The Stars (Sable). Also: Bret Hart, Rey Misterio Jr., Steve Austin, Roddy Piper, Fritz Von Erich.

Feb. 1998: Wrestling's Top Stars: What's Ahead For '98. Also: Brian Pillman, Sting, Hunter Hearst Helmsley, Reckless Youth.

March 1998: Hart Transplant! The Truth Behind Bret's Defection To WCW. Also: Steve McMichael, Bam Bam Bigelow, Steve Austin, Disco Inferno.

April 1998 (Special Issue): The 1998 INSIDE WRESTLING Computer Tournament. Also: Scott Hall, Marlena, Chris Benoit, Gunn & James, Sabu-Sandman.

May 1998: Is The WWF Screwing Another Hart? Also: Steve Austin, Dallas Page, Booker T, Larry Zbyszko, Al Snow.

June 1998: Exclusive! Steve Austin: The 10 Men Who Inspired His Toughness. Also: Dusty & Dustin, Perry Saturn, Mortis, Jeff Jarrett.

July 1998 (Special Issue): Top Stars Answer Your Personal Questions. Also: Jericho-Misterio Jr., Steve Austin, Sunny, Scott Steiner, Christopher-Michinoku.

Aug. 1998: WrestleMania XIV: The *Real* Winners And Losers. Also: Sunny, Curt Hennig, Dan Severn, Ultimo Dragon.

Sept. 1998: Power Surge! While The NWO Fiddles ... These Men Are Burning. Also: Sable, Ultimo-Guerrero, DeGeneration X-Owen, Rocky Maivia, Mad Russian-Rambo.

Oct. 1998 (Special Issue): WCW Midyear Report. Also: Steve Austin, Taka Michinoku, Al Snow, Hollywood Hogan, Roddy Piper, Misawa-Kawada.

Nov. 1998: Austin vs. Goldberg: Who Would Win And Why. Also: Bret Hart, Dude Love, Junkyard Dog, Helmsley-Michaels, Ray-Booker.

Dec. 1998: DDP's Big Bang Theories: Cutting Loose On Life, Love, & The Ultimate Buzz. Also: Sable-Jackie, Mankind, Hogan-Horace, D-Lo, APW.

Holiday 1998 (Special Issue): Kane: Still Haunted By His Day Of Glory. Also: Eddie Guerrero, Stevie Ray, Val Venis, Turnbuckle Turkey Awards, bonus calendar.

Jan. 1999: Seasons Greetings With A Bang (DDP & Kimberly). Also: Severn-Shamrock, Konnan, Arn, Undertaker-Kane, Chris Jericho.

Feb. 1999: Wrestling's Top Stars: What's Ahead For '99! Also: Hogan & Hart, D-Lo, Ken Shamrock, Slaughter-Snow.

March 1999: Estrange Situation! Insider Reveals: "Shane Still Resents His Father! Also: X-Pac, Hogan-Warrior, Jesse Ventura, Billy Kidman, Scott Norton.

April 1999 (Special Issue): The 1999 INSIDE WRESTLING Computer Tournament. Also: Bossman-McMahon, Steiner & Bischoff, Hollywood Hogan, Wrath, Blue Meanie.

May 1999: Team Corporate's WrestleMania Scare! Mankind's Title Victory Could Have Spoiled Everything! Also: New Age Outlaws, Eddie Guerrero, Triple-H, Bill Goldberg.

June 1999: Still In-Vince-Ible! What Will It Take To Topple This Man? Also: Rey Misterio Jr., ECW, Triple-H, NWO, Blue Meanie.

July 1999 (Special Issue): Top Stars Answer Your Personal Questions. Also: Vince McMahon, Vincent, Eric Bischoff, Giant Baba.

Aug. 1999: WrestleMania XV: The *Real* Winners And Losers! Also: Vam Dam-Lynn, Saturn, Goldust, Steiner-Bagwell.

Sept. 1999: Shane, Come Back! Can Vince Survive Without His Son? Also: Bret Hart, Rick Rude, Ken Shamrock, Hogan-Flair-Page-Goldberg, Tajiri-Crazy.

Oct. 1999 (Special Issue): WCW Midyear Report. Also: Mankind & Shamrock, Snow-Holly, Sting, Edge, Flair-Robinson, AIWF.

Nov. 1999: Crash At The Bash! Enter Sid, Viciously! Also: Undertaker-Austin, Acolytes, Master P, Debra, Justin Credible.

Dec. 1999: The Rock: What Makes You Love/Hate This Man? Also: Sting, Shane Douglas, Droz, Piper-Bagwell, Taz.

Holiday 1999 (Special Issue): The 1999 Turnbuckle Turkey Awards. Also: Sting, Dogg-Gunn, Undertaker, Steve Corino, 2000 calendar.

Jan. 2000: Dreaming Of An Extreme Christmas (Tommy Dreamer & Francine). Also: Goldberg, Al Snow, Billy Gunn, Doring & Road Kill, cigar-chompers.

Feb. 2000: Wrestling's Top Stars: What's Ahead For 2000! Also: Vince-Bulldog, Mike Awesome, Sid Vicious, Gorilla Monsoon.

March 2000: Kevin Nash & Scott Hall: Getting Inside The Outsiders' Heads. Also: Dudleys, Jerry Lynn, Vince-DX, Kimberly, Zero Gravity.

April 2000 (Special Issue): The Y2K Computer Tournament. Also: Jarrett-PTB, Christopher & Taylor, Lou E. Dangerously, Lawler-Fantastico.

May 2000: Hey, Scott, Watch Your Back! The NWO Is Setting You Up! Also: Hacksaw Duggan, Rikishi Phatu, Test, Mike Awesome.

June 2000: Chris Jericho's Deadliest Enemy: His Ego! Also: Tazz, Kidman-Torrie, Nash-Funk, Buff Bagwell, New Jack.

July 2000 (Special Issue): It's True! Kurt Angle Will Be Hotter Than The Rock In Six Months! Also: Elizabeth, Steve Blackman, Norman Smiley, Spike Dudley, personal questions.

Aug. 2000: WrestleMania 2000: The *Real* Winners & Losers! Also: Dustin-Funk, Eddie Guerrero, ECW extreme?, WCW analysis.

Sept. 2000: Those Damn Dudleys! Is There An Evil Act Fans Won't Cheer? Also: Billy Kidman, Taka Michinoku, Yoshihiro Tajiri, Jeff Jarrett.

Oct. 2000 (Special Issue): WCW Midyear Report. Also: Kurt Angle, Malenko-Saturn, Lance Storm, Tori, Jumbo Tsuruta, ECW headliners.

Nov. 2000: When Will Triple-H Proclaim ... "I'm Sick Of Being A McMahon!" Also: Trish Stratus, Shane Douglas, Hulk Hogan, Kevin Nash, Yoshihiro Tajiri.
[FULL-COLOR BEGINNING WITH JANUARY 2001]

Jan. 2001: Olympic Games: What Kind Of Angle Has Curt Been Running? Also: Tazz-Lawler, Big Vito, Stacy Keibler, Chris Benoit, Kid Kash, Chyna.

March 2001: Who Knows The Rock's Role? Is He Ditching Wrestling For Hollywood? Also: Trish Stratus, Billy Gunn, Jarrett-Sting, C.W. Anderson, Booker T.

May 2001: The WrestleMania Tip Sheet: What You Must Know About The Event Of The Year! Also: Scott Steiner, Dudleys, Malenko & Lita, Shane Douglas, Raven.

Aug. 2001: Game Face! We Haven't Seen Hunter's Ugly Side ... But Just Wait! Also: WWF vs. WCW, Kurt Angle, Vince McMahon, Booker T, Hardys & Lita, Haas brothers, WCW babes.

Oct. 2001: Will Debra Ice Stone-Cold? Also: Vince vs. Shane, Chyna, William Regal, former Big Three stars.

Dec. 2001: The WWF-WCW Dream Matches We Really Want! Also: Tazz, Dudleys, Perry Saturn, Johnny Valentine, 100 WCW facts.

Feb. 2002: RVD: The Story You've Been Missing For 10 Years! Also: Hardys, Randy Orton, Shawn Stasiak, Turnbuckle Turkey Awards.

April 2002: Feud Alert! The Lowdown On 2002's Hotest Showdowns! Also: Rikishi, Stacy Keibler, Shane Helms, 2001 report cards.

June 2002: Special Comeback Issue: Triple-H, Chris Benoit, Kevin Nash. Also: Chris Jericho, Howard Stern, hypothetical unification showdowns.

Aug. 2002: WrestleMania X8: The *Real* Winners And Losers. Also: Hulk Hogan, Scott Steiner, Jamie Noble, Jarrett-Christopher, All-Japan.

Oct. 2002: Dark Side Be Damned! Undertaker's At His Best As Himself! Also: Ric Flair, Triple-H, Wahoo McDaniel, Goldberg, WWE-Hollywood.

Dec. 2002: The Impossible Dream, Part 2: Can Angle Win Another Olympic Gold? Also: Shane McMahon, PTC-WWE, Trish Stratus, Malice, next best things.

INSIDE WRESTLING

ONLY $5 EACH

Send To: LONDON PUBLISHING CO.
BOX 910
FT. WASHINGTON, PA 19034

Please send me the back issues of INSIDE WRESTLING I have checked off.
I have enclosed $_____ for each issue as payment in full.

Name _____
(PRINT YOUR NAME AND ADDRESS CLEARLY)

Address _____

City _____

State _____ Zip _____

Please indicate method of payment:

☐ Check or money order
(enclosed and payable to London Publishing Co.)

☐ VISA # _____

☐ MasterCard # _____
Expiration Date: ___/___
MO YR

Signature: _____

☐ MAR 95	☐ SEP 96	☐ HOL 97	☐ OCT 98	☐ JUL 99	☐ APR 00	☐ MAY 01
☐ JUN 95	☐ OCT 96	☐ JAN 98	☐ NOV 98	☐ AUG 99	☐ MAY 00	☐ AUG 01
☐ OCT 95	☐ NOV 96	☐ FEB 98	☐ DEC 98	☐ SEP 99	☐ JUN 00	☐ OCT 01
☐ NOV 95	☐ DEC 96	☐ MAR 98	☐ HOL 98	☐ OCT 99	☐ JUL 00	☐ DEC 01
☐ DEC 95	☐ HOL 96	☐ APR 98	☐ JAN 99	☐ NOV 99	☐ AUG 00	☐ FEB 02
☐ JAN 96	☐ FEB 97	☐ MAY 98	☐ FEB 99	☐ DEC 99	☐ SEP 00	☐ APR 02
☐ FEB 96	☐ JUN 97	☐ JUN 98	☐ MAR 99	☐ HOL 99	☐ OCT 00	☐ JUN 02
☐ MAR 96	☐ OCT 97	☐ JUL 98	☐ APR 99	☐ JAN 00	☐ NOV 00	☐ AUG 02
☐ JUN 96	☐ NOV 97	☐ AUG 98	☐ MAY 99	☐ FEB 00	☐ JAN 01	☐ OCT 02
☐ AUG 96	☐ DEC 97	☐ SEP 98	☐ JUN 99	☐ MAR 00	☐ MAR 01	☐ DEC 02

In case of a sellout, indicate substitute choice: _____

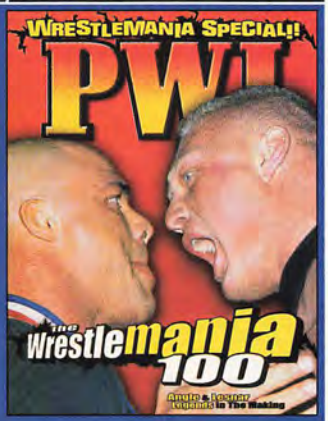
For all orders outside the U.S., you must add $1.50 for every back issue to be sent via surface mail, and $3.00 for every back issue to be sent airmail. Int'l money order in U.S. funds only. Please allow 6-8 weeks for delivery.

5981/0902

between falls

PRO WRESTLING ILLUSTRATED welcomes readers' comments on any of our stories or columns. Send letters to: BETWEEN FALLS Box 1148, Ft. Washington, PA 19034
Or you can e-mail your comments to prowrestlingillustrated@yahoo.com
Letters preceded by a ☎ indicate letters left by fans on the *PWI* Hotline (1-900-226-4PWI; see ad elsewhere in this issue).

LEGENDS MADE?



When we opted for a Kurt Angle-Brock Lesnar cover story for our May 2003 issue, we were confident their WWE Smackdown title match would make WrestleMania XIX one of the most memorable 'Manias ever. Even considering Angle's physical limitations and a botched shooting star press by Lesnar, few readers questioned whether Angle-Lesnar lived up to the hype.

"It was a classic," wrote Jorge Castanzos of Truth or Consequences, New Mexico. "Angle was limited because of his neck and Lesnar wasn't experienced enough to know when he was too fatigued to do the shooting star press, but it didn't matter. It was still great."

Wrote Marie Benesto of Hollywood, Maryland: "Angle and Lesnar set an impossibly high standard for themselves, considering Angle was injured and this was Lesnar's first WrestleMania. But after it was over, I asked myself whether it was worthy of WrestleMania. No matter how you pick it apart, it was WrestleMania-worthy."

"Would Angle walk away without becoming paralyzed?" asked Reginald Ross of Hampton, Virginia. "Would Lesnar, the youngster pushed so hard and fast, deliver at his first 'Mania? That real-life drama made it a very compelling, if not classic match."

"WRESTLEMANIA 100" FEEDBACK

Your special section entitled "The WrestleMania 100," published in the May 2003 issue was fabulous. In addition to featuring historical highlights, you included truly classic photos of this legendary event. Thanks ever so much!

ROBERT COFFEY
South Gate, CA

I want to point out a mixup that was in your recent "WrestleMania 100" section. In your profile of "Macho Man" Randy Savage, who was ranked number four, you forgot to mention his win over Greg "The Hammer" Valentine in the second round of the WWF championship tournament at WrestleMania IV. You mentioned Savage's victories over Butch Reed and One Man Gang in other rounds, but skipped over his second-round win over Valentine. I just thought you would like to know about this oversight.

MATT TREMLEY
Lukeskywalker_10@hotmail.com

NOT A DEAD ISSUE

Throughout the April 2003 issue of *PWI,* there were repeated criticisms of Triple-H and the Katie Vick angle. What your staff fails to realize is that WWE is doing the right thing by raising the bar for controversy and "shock TV," both of which have the potential to draw big ratings if done correctly.

I've never been a Triple-H fan, but after that very funny and entertaining storyline, I have new respect for him and WWE. The editors and writers at *PWI* need to stop being so stiff regarding such a brilliant angle.

TIM ALLEN
Lake City, FL

RAW ON RIGHT COURSE

The Rock turning heel was the turning point in *Raw's* fortunes. Although I think he is a great babyface, he is much more effective as a heel feuding with "Stone-Cold" Steve Austin, Rob Van Dam, and, yes, even Bill Goldberg.

WWE's writers obviously noticed how *Smackdown* was taking off in the fall and winter, and learned how to beef up *Raw.* Having stars such as Rock, Austin, Van Dam, Goldberg, Triple-H, Booker T, Kane, and Chris Jericho will make *Raw* **the** show to watch in the future.

NATHAN DAVIS
Fort Wayne, IN

TOO FAR TOO FAST

To the delightful surprise of the wrestling industry, NWA-TNA's pay-per-view buy rates are on the upswing, and

Surprise, surprise! We actually found a reader who enjoyed Triple-H's part in the Katie Vick storyline. And Tim Allen doesn't even consider himself a fan of "The Game."

chances are good that the fledgling promotion will be around for a while. But as soon as the financial outlook began to improve, Jeff Jarrett went on *Get In The Ring* radio and discussed expansion plans, including a possible cable contract and a house show tour.

Haven't the Jarretts learned anything from MECW, the XWF, and WWA? Those promotions were making plans to take over the world before they sold a ticket. Instead of adopting a WWE model of doing business, they should continue with their own unique way of generating revenue as long as the buy rates improve.

If someone like Ted Turner offers an irresistible cable deal, that would be great. Otherwise, the Jarretts should build on their current momentum in the PPV market.

DAVID BLOSSOM
Virginia, MN

Depending on what outfit he wears, Rey Misterio Jr. could remind you of any one of a number of comic book heroes. Reader Miguel Diaz likens him to Spiderman—and likes his chances of becoming Smackdown champ.

MISTERIO vs. INCREDIBLE HULK?

While watching wrestling, I like to compare today's superstars to my favorite comic book superheroes. Hulk Hogan, for example, is the wrestling version of Superman. Rey Misterio Jr., on the other hand, is Spiderman.

Here are more of my comparisons: Bill Goldberg is The Hulk, Brock Lesnar is Venom, Steve Austin is Wolverine, Sting is Batman, Kurt Angle is Captain America, The Rock is The Punisher, The Undertaker is Ghost Rider, Shawn Michaels is Ironman, The Big Show is Juggernaut, Triple-H is Green Goblin, Ric Flair is Magneto, Rob Van Dam is Daredevil, Rikishi is The Blob, Vince McMahon is Dr. Doom, and Scott Steiner is Green Lantern.

I've also come to the conclusion that Rey Misterio Jr. has the unique abilities and skill to hold the WWE Smackdown championship very soon. It reminds me of when Spiderman beat The Hulk—anything can happen.

MIGUEL DIAZ
Vineland, NJ

THE GREAT ESCAPE

When I was younger, around 11 or 12, I used to save up all the money I could—mostly quarters and spare change—just to buy your magazines at the local gas station. I was too young for a real job, but I did a few chores where my mom worked, such as sweeping the floor, taking trash around back, and making deliveries. I remember how she would always give me a little money out of her paycheck to spend on the things I wanted, which usually meant wrestling stuff.

My dad was never home, and I can recall times when all we had to eat were beans 'n' weenies from a can, and keeping warm meant sleeping on the hardwood floor—close enough to the space heater to stay warm, but far enough not to catch my blanket on fire.

I'd watch wrestling through the black-and-white fuzz of our old TV in our otherwise-empty living room. I looked forward to watching these larger-than-life characters play out these terrific fantasies. To me, it was a release, a world to immerse myself into that wasn't filled with disappointment or hardship.

In a way, wrestling gave me a reason to grow up, finish school, and rise above my former difficulties. *PWI* and your other publications were a big part of that. I just want you to know that something as simple as a wrestling magazine can save a kid's life.

JESSE MILLER
Carthage, MO □

PWI Hotline Extra!

Your answers to our question of the week!

Question of the Week: Will Bill Goldberg become a long-term player in WWE? (April 1 to 7, 2003)

Hotline callers respond: "Goldberg might slip on a bar of soap and pull his hamstring," said Steve Scullin of New Haven, Connecticut. "Or maybe he'll smash his fist through a vending machine when his Choc-O-Mints don't drop. He won't be there long."

"After a two-year layoff, Goldberg has to be ready to prove he's more than a flash in the pan," noted Judy Woodley of Kamloops, British Columbia. "And he will. Goldberg's a millionaire, but he has to make more money if he wants a comfortable nest egg for the rest of his life."

Jack Krupp of Bakersfield, California, disagrees: "Goldberg will always clash with Vince McMahon because he actually has principles. With McMahon, it's all about money and ego. With Goldberg, it's about honor and integrity."

PWI official ratings

For period ended April 20, 2003

TOP 10

1 TRIPLE-H
269, Greenwich, CT
(1) WWE Raw champion

2 BROCK LESNAR
295, Minneapolis, MN
(3) WWE Smackdown champion

3 YUJI NAGATA
228, Tokyo, Japan
(5) IWGP heavyweight champion

4 SHINYA HASHIMOTO
287, Gifu, Japan
(2) All-Japan Triple Crown champion

5 BOOKER T
250, Houston, TX
(6) No. 1 contender: WWE Raw title

6 JEFF JARRETT
230, Nashville, TN
(7) NWA heavyweight champion

7 JOHN CENA
260, Los Angeles, CA
(-) No. 1 contender: WWE Smackdown title

8 CHRIS BENOIT
224, Edmonton, Alberta
(8) No. 2 contender: WWE Smackdown title

9 KENTA KOBASHI
282, Fukuchiyama, Japan
(10) GHC heavyweight champion

10 CHRIS JERICHO
225, Winnipeg, Manitoba
(-) No. 2 contender: WWE Raw title

Booker T

TAG TEAMS

1 SHELTON BENJAMIN & CHARLIE HAAS
Combined weight: 510 pounds
(1) WWE Smackdown tag team champions

2 KANE & ROB VAN DAM
Combined weight: 563 pounds
(4) WWE Raw tag team champions

3 MASA CHONO & HIROYOSHI TENZAN
Combined weight: 505 pounds
(3) IWGP International tag team champions

4 CHIEF MORLEY & LANCE STORM
Combined weight: 481 pounds
(-) No. 1 contenders: WWE Raw tag title

5 JUN AKIYAMA & AKITOSHI SAITO
Combined weight: 475 pounds
(6) GHC tag team champions

6 EDDIE & CHAVO GUERRERO JR.
Combined weight: 408 pounds
(5) No. 1 contenders: WWE Smackdown tag title

7 JERRY LYNN & RED
Combined weight: 363 pounds
(-) NWA tag team champions

8 BUH BUH RAY & D-VON DUDLEY
Combined weight: 579 pounds
(9) No. 2 contenders: WWE Raw tag title

9 A-TRAIN & THE BIG SHOW
Combined weight: 838 pounds
(-) No. 2 contenders: WWE Smackdown tag title

10 CHRISTOPHER DANIELS & LOW-KI
Combined weight: 380 pounds
(-) No. 1 contenders: NWA tag title

WWE RAW

Raw Champion:
TRIPLE-H
(C) 269, Greenwich, CT

1—BOOKER T
(1) 250, Houston, TX
2—CHRIS JERICHO
(3) 225, Winnipeg, Manitoba
3—KEVIN NASH
(-) 303, Detroit, MI
4—SHAWN MICHAELS
(9) 217, San Antonio, TX
5—THE ROCK
(5) 272, Miami, FL
6—SCOTT STEINER
(2) 275, Detroit, MI
7—THE HURRICANE
(10) 210, Raleigh, NC
8—JEFF HARDY
(8) 209, Cameron, NC
9—GOLDUST
(-) 263, Austin, TX
10—TEST
(7) 282, Toronto, Ontario

WWE SMACKDOWN

Smackdown Champion:
BROCK LESNAR
(1) 295, Minneapolis, MN

1—JOHN CENA
(5) 260, Los Angeles, CA
2—CHRIS BENOIT
(2) 224, Edmonton, Alberta
3—MATT HARDY
(6) 220, Cameron, NC
4—RHYNO
(-) 275, Detroit, MI
5—REY MISTERIO JR.
(7) 163, San Diego, CA
6—THE BIG SHOW
(4) 485, Aiken, SC
7—RIKISHI
(9) 424, San Francisco, CA
8—A-TRAIN
(8) 353, Boston, MA
9—BRIAN KENDRICK
(-) 212, Wilson, NC
10—NATHAN JONES
(-) 330, Queensland, Australia

OVW

OVW Champion:
DOUG BASHAM
(1) 241, Louisville, KY

1—NICK DINSMORE
(C) 226, Jefferson, IN
2—ROB CONWAY
(3) 240, Pittsburgh, PA
3—DAMAJA
(2) 251, Seymour, IN
4—JOHNNY JETER
(7) 212, Louisville, KY
5—NOVA
(6) 214, Bricktown, NJ
6—MATT MORGAN
(-) 330, Fairfield, CT
7—LANCE CADE
(8) 253, Omaha, NE
8—RENE DUPREE
(10) 250, Montreal, Quebec
9—MARK JINDRAK
(-) 253, Auburn, NY
10—JOHNNY SPADE
(-) 215, Louisville, KY

RING OF HONOR

ROH Champion:
SAMOA JOE
(7) 270, American Samoa

1—DOUG WILLIAMS
(-) 230, Maidstone, England
2—HOMICIDE
(8) 220, Brooklyn, NY
3—C.M. PUNK
(9) 220, Chicago, IL
4—LOW-KI
(2) 170, Brooklyn, NY
5—PAUL LONDON
(6) 201, Austin, TX
6—AMERICAN DRAGON
(4) 185, Aberdeen, WA
7—RAVEN
(-) 243, Short Hills, NJ
8—A.J. STYLES
(3) 202, Gainesville, GA
9—CHRISTOPHER DANIELS
(7) 210, Los Angeles, CA
10—RED
(-) 147, Brooklyn, NY

Top 10 and Tag Team ratings are based on won-lost records for the past month, quality of opposition, and inherent skill of each wrestler or team. These ratings are compiled by the magazine's editorial board. All other ratings are based on the official current positions of challengers to the top title in each category; certain titleholders receive an automatic spot in the ratings. The number in parentheses indicates a wrestler's position in that category last issue; (-) indicates that the wrestler was not rated in that category last issue. while (C) indicates the wrestler was champion in that category last issue.

CENTRAL WRESTLING ALLIANCE: Champion—Terry Alan; **1**—Bo Johnson; **2**—Syxe; **3**—Jimmy Valiant; **4**—Shane Lewis; **5**—Larry D; **6**—Tommy Green; **7**—Payne; **8**—Jimmy Lamb; **9**—Maddawg; **10**—Diamond.

CHAMPIONSHIP PRO WRESTLING: Champion—Johnny Graham; **1**—Switchblade; **2**—The Masked Superstar; **3**—Shane Shadows; **4**—Brock Singleton; **5**—Doug Delicious; **6**—Jimmy Valiant; **7**—Bob Keller; **8**—John Balsamo; **9**—Brian Johnson; **10**—Zubov.

EAST COAST WRESTLING ASSOCIATION: Champion—Christopher Daniels; **1**—Japanese Pool Boy; **2**—Mike Kruel; **3**—Prince Nana; **4**—Cheetah Master; **5**—Red; **6**—Mr. Ooh La La; **7**—Ace Darling; **8**—Johnny Maxx; **9**—Mozart Fontaine; **10**—Billy Bax.

INTERNATIONAL WRESTLING CARTEL: Champion—Jimmy Vegas; **1**—Dennis Gregory; **2**—A.J. Styles; **3**—Super Hentai; **4**—Raven; **5**—Dean Radford; **6**—Shirley Doe; **7**—Bubba the Bulldog; **8**—Sterling James Keenan; **9**—T. Rantula; **10**—Seth James.

MAINE EVENT WRESTLING: Champion—Title Vacant; **1**—Jerry Lawler; **2**—Brian Christopher; **3**—Julio Dinero; **4**—Syxx-Pac; **5**—Raven; **6**—Reckless Youth; **7**—Mike Quackenbush; **8**—Robbie Ellis; **9**—Don Montoya; **10**—Rob Eckos.

MAXIMUM PRO WRESTLING: Champion—D-Lo Brown; **1**—Chris Sabin; **2**—Gangrel; **3**—Johnny Swinger; **4**—Jerry Lynn; **5**—Sabu; **6**—A-1; **7**—Eric Young; **8**—Bobby Rude; **9**—Larry Destiny; **10**—Dyson Pryce.

NATIONAL WRESTLING LEAGUE: Champion—Samu; **1**—John Rambo; **2**—King Kong Bundy; **3**—The Patriot; **4**—Jake Davis; **5**—Doink the Clown; **6**—Flex Fenom; **7**—Aidiean; **8**—The Freak; **9**—Hyjinx; **10**—Kevin Featherstone.

NWA HAWAII: Champion—Tiki; **1**—J.T. Wolfen; **2**—Kris Kavanaugh; **3**—Sickdog; **4**—Lightning Leni; **5**—Kapu; **6**—Rick Megee; **7**—Cholo; **8**—Sassy Assassin; **9**—Mike Taylor; **10**—David Heart.

ONTARIO CHAMPIONSHIP WRESTLING: Champion—Youngson; **1**—Mike Albright; **2**—Chris Pillon; **3**—The Great Orbax; **4**—Chuck Wagon; **5**—Justin Copeland; **6**—Jake Leduc; **7**—Mantis X; **8**—Tommy Wonder; **9**—Rick Keller; **10**—Danny Steele.

RHODE ISLAND WRESTLING ALLIANCE: Champion—Danger Boy Alfredo; **1**—Wolverine; **2**—Danny Cama; **3**—Mael; **4**—Danny Boy O'Callahan; **5**—Lord Davios; **6**—Bill Thomas; **7**—Derek Greenlee; **8**—Johnny T; **9**—Sonny D; **10**—Romie McFarland.

TRANS WORLD WRESTLING ALLIANCE: Champion—Skeeter McCoy; **1**—Jerry Lawler; **2**—Hacksaw Duggan; **3**—D-Lo Brown; **4**—J-Money; **5**—Johnny Graham; **6**—Rockin' Rebel; **7**—Saboth; **8**—Dave Patera; **9**—Rob Noxious; **10**—Ryan Loot.

WORLD XTREME WRESTLING: Champion—Afa Jr.; **1**—Slyk Wagner Brown; **2**—Samu; **3**—Gene Snisky; **4**—Malachi; **5**—Billy Dream; **6**—Black Pearl; **7**—Boogalou; **8**—Mana the Polynesian Warrior; **9**—Original Sinn; **10**—Sugaa.

NWA

NWA Champion:
JEFF JARRETT
(C) 230, Nashville, TN

1—RICKY MURDOCH
(8) 261, Houston, TX
2—JORGE ESTRADA
(1) 225, Memphis, TN
3—RAVEN
(-) 243, Short Hills, NJ
4—HOTSTUFF HERNANDEZ
(4) 280, Houston, TX
5—A.J. STYLES
(2) 202, Gainesville, GA
6—KEVIN NORTHCUTT
(-) 348, Chalmette, LA
7—SHINYA HASHIMOTO
(3) 287, Gifu, Japan
8—PRESTON QUINN
(-) 240, Gloucester, VA
9—ZACK MERCURY
(-) 255, Lac du Bonnet, Manitoba
10—JOHNNY MOSS
(10) 240, Egremont, England

NWA-TNA

NWA Champion:
JEFF JARRETT
(C) 230, Nashville, TN

1—KID KASH
(1) 202, Johnson City, TN
2—RAVEN
(2) 243, Short Hills, NJ
3—D-LO BROWN
(-) 281, Chicago, IL
4—A.J. STYLES
(3) 202, Gainesville, GA
5—JERRY LYNN
(4) 216, Minneapolis, MN
6—PERRY SATURN
(-) 237, Boston, MA
7—RED
(5) 147, Brooklyn, NY
8—GLEN GILBERTTI
(-) 234, Brooklyn, NY
9—MIKE SANDERS
(9) 230, Kennesaw, GA
10—DAVID YOUNG
(-) 246, Memphis, TN

JAPAN

1—YUJI NAGATA
(2) 228, Tokyo, Japan
IWGP heavyweight champion
2—SHINYA HASHIMOTO
(1) 287, Gifu, Japan
All-Japan Triple Crown champion
3—KENTA KOBASHI
(3) 282, Fukuchiyama, Japan
GHC heavyweight champion
4—YOSHIHIRO TAKAYAMA
(10) 270, Sapporo, Japan
5—KEIJI MUTO
(4) 245, Yamanashi, Japan
6—SATOSHI KOJIMA
(9) 223, Tokyo, Japan
7—MITSUHARU MISAWA
(5) 228, Ashikaga, Japan
8—KENDO KA SHIN
(-) 195, Tokyo, Japan
9—GENICHIRO TENRYU
(6) 235, Tokyo, Japan
10—MASA CHONO
(8) 235, Tokyo, Japan

MEXICO

1—SHOCKER
(1) 185, Guadalajara, Mexico
2—HECTOR GARZA
(6) 220, Monterrey, Mexico
3—VAMPIRO
(2) 220, Thunder Bay, Ontario
4—UNIVERSO DOS MIL
(-) 240, Mexico City, Mexico
5—EL HIJO DEL SANTO
(4) 180, Tulancingo, Mexico
6—FELINO
(-) 165, Mexico City, Mexico
7—ULTIMO GUERRERO
(9) 173, Mexico City, Mexico
8—LA PARKA
(7) 235, Torreon, Mexico
9—BLACK TIGER
(3) 193, Mexico City, Mexico
10—REY BUCANERO
(8) 197, Mexico City, Mexico

ratings analysis

Every month, this column will tell fans how we go about rating over 200 wrestlers in 22 different categories. It is a behind-the-scenes look at the most important–and respected–ratings system in the sport. This column is vital reading for all wrestling fans.

The list is shrinking! **Triple-H** returns to the top of our Top 10 this issue, the second in a row in which he earned that distinction. It would have been difficult for us *not* to give him that spot. He has gone through most of the top half of the Raw roster during the last year or so. Just look at those ranked below him in the Raw ratings:

Chris Jericho

Booker T was given a reasonable chance of ending "The Game's" reign of terror over the Raw brand at WrestleMania, but it didn't happen, and he ought not to count on getting many more shots in the near future. **Chris Jericho** may be the MVP of the Raw brand, but he lost the undisputed WWF title to Hunter at WrestleMania X8, and can you really envision another chapter of the Hunter-Jericho on-again/off-again feud? Two spots below Jericho is **Shawn Michaels**, who upset Triple-H for the title at Survivor Series, only to lose it back a month later at Armageddon. As a part-time wrestler, he won't get another run with the belt, either.

Below HBK, you have **The Rock**, who might next return in time for next year's WrestleMania, **Scott Steiner**, whom Triple-H beat twice on pay-per-view earlier this year and who has tumbled *deep* into the mid-card ranks, **The Hurricane**, who despite getting a win over The Rock on *Raw* is still largely a comedy act (and who has already lost clean to Triple-H on TV). Then you get to **Jeff Hardy**, who has also lost clean to "The Game," **Goldust** (ditto Hurricane), and **Test**, who spends a little too much time gawking at the **Torrie Wilson** *Playboy*.

And we've left out **Kane** and **Rob Van Dam**, both of whom were once prime candidates to take Triple-H's place atop the Raw heap, but ultimately were outwitted and outwrestled by him. Kane and RVD were Raw tag team champs at press time, so they didn't make the singles ratings.

The only man in the Raw ratings who seems like a serious threat to Triple-H's dominance is the returning **Kevin Nash** (ranked third under Triple-H). But it's just hard for us to see him as anything more than a potential one-month champion.

Then, of course, there is **Bill Goldberg**. "Da Man" didn't make our rankings at all because he hadn't wrestled a single WWE match as of press time. Logic tells us Goldberg will be the man to dethrone Hunter (and reign for more than a month), but given "The Game's" influence backstage and the fact that he and Goldberg had a nasty run-in a few years ago, it's possible that Helmsley will prove to be too much for Goldberg as well. If that's the case, Triple-H will have to check the Raw roster and ask, "Who's *left?*" And then it might be time to elevate **Spike Dudley**. Yep, H^3 might be a little too dominant for his own good and for the good of the company.

On the other side ... Taking a quick look at our Smackdown ratings, which also take into account the fallout from WrestleMania XIX, there are a few more interesting possibilities in the title picture. **John Cena** has quickly developed into a serious contender, but at least three of the other stars in our Smackdown ratings could present interesting (and fresh) challenges to **Brock Lesnar** in the next few months.

First there's **Chris Benoit**, who was set to take the place of **Kurt Angle** in the main event of WrestleMania before Angle decided at the last minute to postpone his neck surgery. Benoit can get a compelling match out of just about anyone. There's no reason to suspect that Lesnar-Benoit wouldn't be special. Let's hope their first meeting is saved for a pay-per-view.

Rhyno

Next is a man ranked two spots below Benoit, **Rhyno**. He has the look, the strength, and the intensity to be a major player. And don't completely rule out **Nathan Jones**. If he improves, he could form the other half of one of those colossal battles of big men that **Vince McMahon** loves so much. Under the right circumstances, **Rey Misterio Jr.** and **Eddie Guerrero** (who's not ranked in a singles division this time) could also be interesting foes for big Brock. And now that Angle has undergone surgery that was only expected to keep him out of action for about two months, his rematch with Lesnar is already looming.

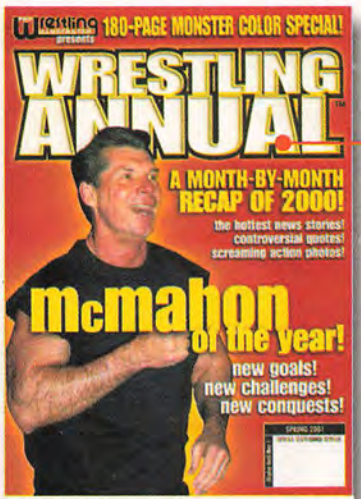
But we think we are offering the viewpoint of many fans when we write that we could do without seeing another installment of Lesnar vs. **The Big Show**, Lesnar vs. **A-Train**, or Lesnar vs. **Rikishi**.

That's all there is right now! As always, if you have any questions or comments regarding our ratings or what you see here, we want to hear from you. Write to: "Ratings Analysis," c/o *PWI*, Box 1148, Fort Washington, PA 19034. □

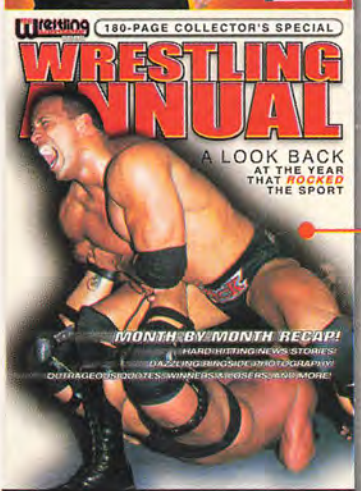
PRO WRESTLING ILLUSTRATED PRESENTS

THE MOST AWESOME WRESTLING MAGAZINES EVER!

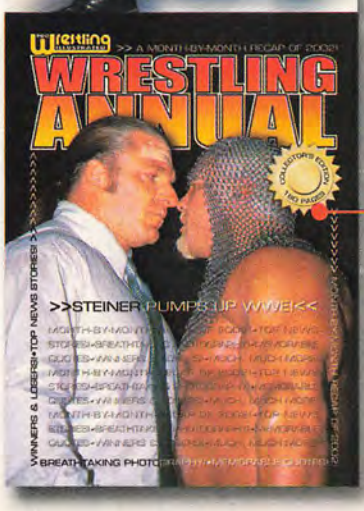
The largest, most colorful magazine specials we've ever published are now being offered at unbelievable savings! Order the three-issue SuperSet and receive a discount of **more than 30% off the original newsstand price!**



>>WRESTLING ANNUAL (2000)
The first magazine of its kind, this 180-page edition takes a full-color, month-by-month look at Y2K, the most tumultuous year in the sport's history.



>>WRESTLING ANNUAL (2001)
The cover headline said it all: "The Year That Rocked The Sport." Month-by-month details. 180 pages! Amazing photos!



>>WRESTLING ANNUAL (2002)
A spectacular look back at the tumultuous year that was 2002. 180 pages of insightful analysis, electrifying photos, and those amazing Jason Conlan caricatures!

☑ **I'VE GOTTA HAVE THEM!** Please send me the **PRO WRESTLING ILLUSTRATED PRESENTS** specials I've indicated below. I am enclosing $9.95 per copy (plus $2 postage and handling) as payment in full for each issue. OR let me save more than 30% by ordering the SuperSet of all three for $22.00 (plus $3 postage and handling).

☐ **2000 WRESTLING ANNUAL—Spring 2001**
($9.95 plus $2 for postage and handling)

☐ **2001 WRESTLING ANNUAL—Spring 2002**
($9.95 plus $2 for postage and handling)

☐ **2002 WRESTLING ANNUAL—Spring 2003**
($9.95 plus $2 for postage and handling)

☐ **SUPERSET—All Three!**
($22.00 plus $3 for postage and handling)

For all orders outside the U.S., please add postage as follows: Canada—Surface mail: $3.00 for single issue or $6.00 for the SuperSet; Airmail: $3.50 for single issue or $7.00 for the SuperSet. Foreign—Surface mail: $4.00 for single issue or $7.00 for the SuperSet; Airmail: $8.00 for single issue or $15.50 for the SuperSet. International money orders in U.S. funds only. Please allow 6-8 weeks for delivery.

Please indicate method of payment:
☐ Check or money order (enclosed and payable to London Publishing Co.)

☐ Visa ☐ MasterCard # _____

Expiration date: ____/____ MO/YR

Signature: _____

Send to: **London Publishing Co., P.O. Box 910, Ft. Washington, PA 19034**
Print your name and address clearly

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ **STATE** _____ **ZIP** _____

6020/02-03

Drawing Blood

By Jason Conlan

I can see that Paul E may have been right Tommy, and that you do have a lot of talent, and vision... it's just that the writing team obviously don't look for that sort of thing any more...
Sorry Mr.Jones, it was an honest mistake, I just expected you to look more like the Hulk complexion-wise. I mean, all the guys back-stage were saying you were " as green as grass ".
You hear that mister J, that's A-Train-Mania running wild...
Sounds more like a collective yawn to me...
The funny thing Is, that he's such a prima donna these days, this is the only way he'll travel...
Left here, fatty!!

To enter sweepstakes, complete and return the entry/order form to address printed on entry/order form. Or print your name, address and e-mail address (optional) on a postcard and mail to: Sweepstakes, P.O. Box 2021, Marion, OH 43306-8121. Entries must be received by 1/16/04.

Super Million Dollar X Sweepstakes & Prize Fantasy Sweepstakes

OFFICIAL RULES

NO PURCHASE, PAYMENT, SALES PRESENTATION, OR CONTRIBUTION NECESSARY TO ENTER OR WIN. A PURCHASE WILL NOT IMPROVE YOUR CHANCES OF WINNING. Sweepstakes begins 10/1/02. Entry must be received by date specified elsewhere in offer or by prize deadline(s) below, whichever is sooner. Follow all entry instructions published elsewhere in this offer.

SUPER MILLION DOLLAR X SWEEPSTAKES

Winner will be determined by comparing individual sweepstakes numbers on all eligible entries received with the pre-selected winning number. Selection of winning number will be conducted under the supervision of an independent auditing firm and an independent judging organization whose decisions are final. If the winning number is returned, winner notification will be made on or about 4/30/04. IF WINNING NUMBER IS NOT RETURNED, PRIZE WILL NOT BE AWARDED. Sweepstakes open to legal U.S. residents (except residents of Florida and Texas), and to residents of Canada and other countries where offered and permitted by law. Void in Florida, Texas and where prohibited by law.

CONSUMER DISCLOSURES: You have not yet won. No purchase necessary. One prize of $1,000,000, if claimed, will be awarded as an annuity of 30 installments of $33,333.34, or winner may choose $475,000 lump sum cash instead of annuity. Current value of annuity as of 08/12/02 was $475,000. Odds of winning are 1 in 120 million. Sweepstakes registered by Ventura Associates, Inc., 1040 6th Ave., NY, NY 10018 & may be presented in different creative presentations by different organizations. Sweepstakes ends 1/16/04.

Illegible, incomplete, mutilated or mechanically reproduced entry forms or entry forms that have been tampered with or not obtained through legitimate channels will be disqualified. Liability for an irregular entry form will be limited to replacement with another. If, due to a printing, production or other error, more than one valid entry form with the pre-selected winning number is returned, a random drawing will be conducted from among all eligible entries received with the pre-selected winning number to determine one winner.

SCA, Ventura Associates and any of the Sweepstakes Presenters are not liable for payment of any prize to entrants who have violated these official rules.

For the name of the winner, available after 7/30/04 (if prize is claimed), send self-addressed, stamped envelope by 5/31/04 to: Super Million X Winner, P. O. Box 5772, Ellenton, FL 34222-5007.

PRIZE FANTASY SWEEPSTAKES

Winner(s) of prizes below will be selected from among all eligible entries received in random drawings conducted on or about 5/31/04 by Ventura Associates, Inc., whose decisions are final. All prizes guaranteed to be awarded. Sweepstakes open to legal U.S. residents and to residents of Canada & other countries where offered & permitted by law. Void where prohibited by law. For a list of major winners, available after 7/30/04, send self-addressed, stamped envelope by 5/31/04 to: "Prize Fantasy Sweepstakes" Winners, PO Box 5383, Ellenton, FL 34222-5003.

PRIZE FANTASY GRAND PRIZE GIVEAWAY CONSUMER DISCLOSURES: You have not yet won. No purchase necessary. Grand Prize winner chooses from a variety of merchandise with approximately the same value (e.g., automobiles, vacations, electronics, etc.) Approximate retail value (ARV) of merchandise: up to $27,000 or $25,000 cash option. Estimated odds of winning: 1:6,900,000. To choose automobile, winner must be a licensed driver and assume all responsibility for registration, title, license, taxes, insurance fees and any other options not expressly included. Sweepstakes registered by Ventura Associates, Inc., 1040 6th Ave., NY, NY 10018 & may be presented in different creative presentations by different organizations. Sweepstakes ends 1/16/04.

PRIZE FANTASY GIVEAWAY CONSUMER DISCLOSURES: You have not yet won. No purchase necessary. Prize levels First through Third will offer a variety of merchandise, electronics, jewelry, housewares, etc. These winners only may select cash or any prize offered at level won. Values at a given level will be approximately the same. ARV of merchandise prizes & estimated odds of winning: 1 First Prize (ARV: $2,000): 1: 6,900,000; 1 Second Prize (ARV: $1,000): 1:6,900,000; 50 Third Prizes (ARV: $100 each): 1: 138,000; 1,000 Fourth Prizes – 35mm Camera (ARV: $65 each, no cash option): 1:6,900. Total ARV: $73,000. Sweepstakes registered by Ventura Associates, Inc. 1040 6th Ave., NY, NY 10018 & may be presented in different creative presentations by different organizations. Sweepstakes ends 1/16/04.

BONUS/EARLY BIRD GIVEAWAY CONSUMER DISCLOSURES: You have not yet won. No purchase necessary. SuperClubs Breezes Curaçao vacation for two prize includes 7 days/6 nights hotel accommodations, all meals, all land & water sports activities with equipment & instruction, airport transfers & hotel taxes & gratuities; round trip coach airfare on Air Jamaica from U.S. gateway city nearest winner's home. ARV: $5,100, depending on location of winner & fares at time of departure. Any expenses not specified herein are winner's responsibility. Estimated odds of winning: 1:6,900,000. Sweepstakes registered by Ventura Associates, Inc., 1040 6th Ave., NY, NY 10018 & may be presented in different creative presentations by different organizations. Sweepstakes ends 1/16/04.

FOR ANY TRAVEL PRIZE: Travel companion(s) required to sign liability release. Dates subject to availability; travel must be completed within 12 months of award. Restrictions & blackout dates apply. If trip won by an eligible minor, s/he must be accompanied by parent or legal guardian.

THE FOLLOWING APPLIES TO ALL OF THE SWEEPSTAKES ABOVE:

No mechanically reproduced entries. No responsibility assumed for lost, late, misdirected, damaged, incomplete, illegible or postage-due mail/entries. All such entries will be disqualified. All entries become property of their respective presenters & will not be returned.

Any winner will be notified in writing within 2 weeks of selection. Winner may be required (at judges' discretion) to sign & return an Affidavit of Eligibility/Liability Release, & where legally permissible, a Publicity Release within 14 days of date on notification. Acceptance of a prize by a minor will require execution by parent or legal guardian of required documentation. Costs for goods or services not specified are winner's responsibility. No substitution of prizes except by Sponsor due to unavailability. Except where prohibited by law, winners consent to use of their names, hometowns, prizes won & likenesses for promotional purposes on behalf of all presenters without additional compensation. Void where prohibited by law. All federal, state, provincial & local laws & regulations apply. Prize values in U. S. currency. No transfer or assignment of prize permitted. Winners responsible for all taxes on prizes. U.S. laws govern all aspects of this sweepstakes.

Winner selection executed at 1040 6th Ave., NY, NY 10018. Ventura Associates, the independent judging organization, has provided all prizes at no charge. Presenting organizations reserve the right to modify, suspend, or terminate the promotion if it becomes technically corrupted. In such event, prizes will be awarded from eligible entries received prior to this date of termination. Employees of presenting organizations, sweepstakes judges, their respective advertising & promotion agencies & any other person or organization directly involved with the promotion & their respective immediate families & household members are ineligible.

Canadian residents, to win, must first correctly answer, unaided, a time-limited mathematical skill testing question administered by mail. Any litigation regarding the conduct & awarding of a prize in this publicity contest by a resident of the province of Quebec may be submitted to the Regie des alcools, des courses et des jeux.

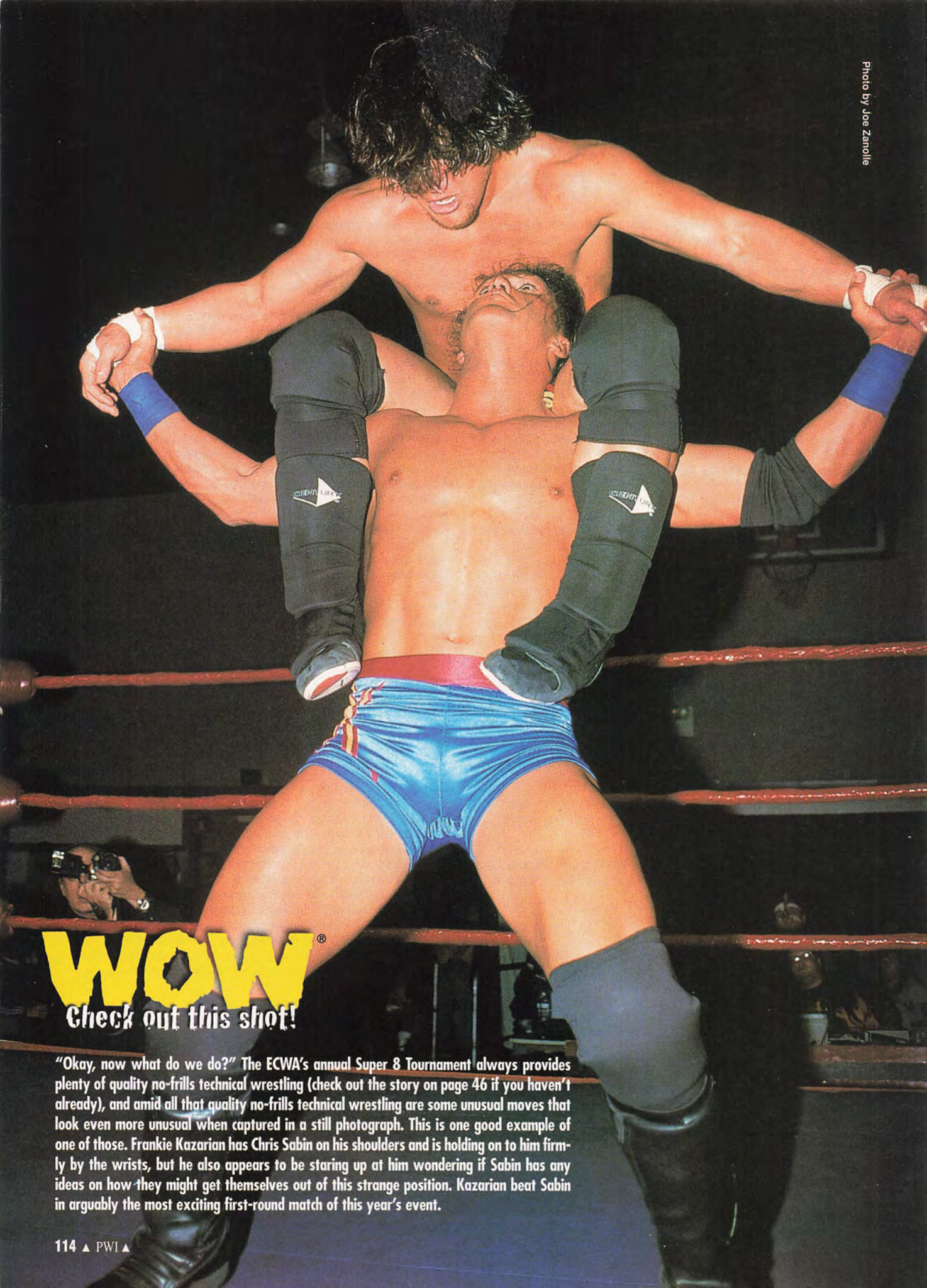


Photo by Joe Zanolle

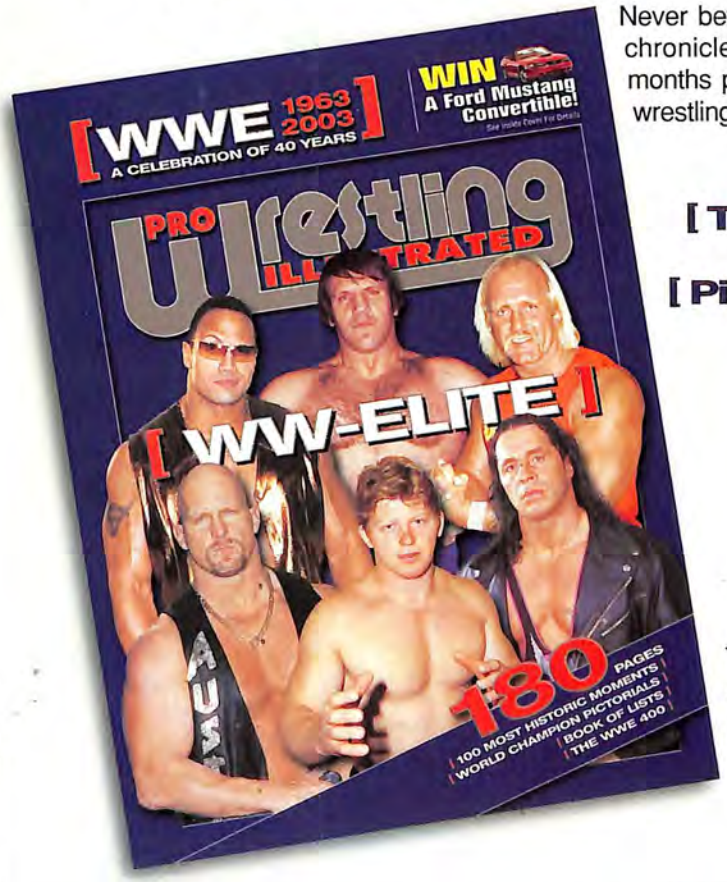
WOW®

Check out this shot!

"Okay, now what do we do?" The ECWA's annual Super 8 Tournament always provides plenty of quality no-frills technical wrestling (check out the story on page 46 if you haven't already), and amid all that quality no-frills technical wrestling are some unusual moves that look even more unusual when captured in a still photograph. This is one good example of one of those. Frankie Kazarian has Chris Sabin on his shoulders and is holding on to him firmly by the wrists, but he also appears to be staring up at him wondering if Sabin has any ideas on how they might get themselves out of this strange position. Kazarian beat Sabin in arguably the most exciting first-round match of this year's event.

[happy birthday, WWE!]

Join the party as *Pro Wrestling Illustrated* celebrates a milestone with a 180-page monster special commemorating WWE's 40 years.



Never before has the history of wrestling's premier federation been chronicled so completely. Our staff of editors and writers spent months poring through our extensive files and picking the brains of wrestling historians to produce this incredible publication.

The celebration includes:

[The 100 Most Important Moments In WWE History]
[Pictorials Of All 31 World Champs]
[The WWE 400]
[The WWE Book Of Lists]

The party begins when you pick up your issue at newsstands on May 13. Or you can order by mail using the form below. (Note to subscribers: This issue IS included with your subscription!)

Clip coupon and send to: **London Publishing Co., P.O. Box 910, FT. WASHINGTON, PA 19034**

○ Please rush me my 180-page **PRO WRESTLING ILLUSTRATED WWE 40th birthday special.**
I am enclosing **$9.95** per copy (plus $2 postage and handling) as payment in full for each issue.

Please indicate method of payment:

○ **Check or money order (enclosed and payable to London Publishing Co.)**
○ **VISA #** _____
○ **MasterCard #** _____
Expiration Date: ____/____ MO / YR

For all orders outside the U.S., please add postage as follows: Canada—Surface mail: $3.00 for single issue ($3.50 airmail.) Foreign—Surface mail: $4.00 for single issue ($8.00 airmail). International money orders in U.S. funds only. Please allow 6-8 weeks for delivery.

Signature: _____

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

6279/04-03

PRO Wrestling® ILLUSTRATED

HOTLINE

Hosted by Will Welsh

When it comes to wrestling, *Pro Wrestling Illustrated* magazine has all the inside information you want and it's only a phone call away. If it happens in the ring, the locker room, or on the road, you'll hear it here first. To get all the breaking stories from every federation, call the *Pro Wrestling Illustrated* Hotline now and you'll be the first to learn about...

- >> Exclusive news from behind the scenes
- >> Upcoming events
- >> Up-to-date results from around the world
- >> Title changes and transactions
- >> Pay-per-view reports
- >> Wrestler of the week
- >> Exclusive scouting reports

PLUS... Tell the editors of *Pro Wrestling Illustrated* what you want to see in the magazine. Dictate a letter to the Editor-in-Chief. Selected letters will be printed in *Pro Wrestling Illustrated*.

UPDATED EVERY WEEKDAY AND AFTER PAY-PER-VIEW EVENTS

new number! call now!

1-900-226-4PWI

☎ This service is available on both touch-tone and rotary-dial phones.

*Cost per minute in the United States is $1.99. Kids, get your parents' permission.

5913/03-02